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## INTRODUCTION

This anthology, prepared with an eye on the East and for use in the Intermediate Colleges, contains a much smaller number of poems than the earlier textbooks. The selection of poems is 'up to date'. Perhaps it will do well as an introduction to a study of English poetry. It is in eleven parts, ranging from the early Elizabethans to the moderns who are either like Robert Bridges, John Masefield, Edmund Blunden and some others in the tradition of the Old poets, or like Eliot, Auden, C. Day Lewis and some others wrongly denigrated by the conservative as 'eccentric' and 'obscure'. The poems of the moderns, selected here, are simple enough for an intermediate student. They will certainly become simpler for the methods adopted in this book to aid the reading. The criticism which goes with each part is fairly exhaustive. It is primarily intended for the teachers. Even if it only stimulates their excellently calculated judgement to a valuable disagreement, the purpose is well served. It is for the teachers to direct the students as to what should be relevant to them in this criticism. Criticism on the poems generally follows that on the poets.

Many debates have been borne in mind and, perhaps, resolved. Part I, which contains Elizabethan lyrics, should make it clearer than ever that the eminent Sir H.J.C. Grierson can be in error when he says that these Elizabethan poets "are pipers of Petrarch's woes, sighing in the strain of Ronsard or more often of Desportes." On the contrary, they seem to have looked in their heart and written their poetry. Not that

sincerity of poetry depends on its biographical truth. A poem could be poetically sincere, even though the events in it were totally imaginary. However, an attempt has been made to show how these Elizabethans acquired poetry in their lyrics and sonnets in spite of their "ragbag" philosophy.

Part II includes some seventeenth century poets, the 'metaphysicals', Dryden, and Pope. The poems of some 'metaphysicals', Dryden, and Pope are calculated to point to the change that has come over English poetry in the last thirty years bringing with it a revolution in critical perspective. The point is to see that the modern reader approaches this kind of poetry unhindered by the preoccupations which misled the readers of the nineteenth century.

Part III deals with the Romantics and their precursors in the understanding of what appears, in the light of the new perspective, the overpraise of the later nineteenth century for them. Such features of the so-called romantic poetry as the exaggerated insistence on 'inspiration' and on the difference between the 'genius' and the ordinary man, the distrust of imitation in poetry, the preference of emotion to thought, of spontaneity to controlled form—all these had better be cleared away into the lumber-room of discarded ideas. There is yet so much of permanent value in the Romantics. This, indeed, enthrals the student of English poetry if he steers clear of the modern consciousness. The poems chosen here are experiments fully justified by the results.

Part IV contains *Songs from Plays*. It is interesting how it is possible for a poet to crystallize the entire



situation of a play in a short song and how it is equally possible for the reader to absorb the peculiar tone and atmosphere of a play from the songs alone. This part of the book is significant in that the songs included here are excellent examples of the concentrated force of poetry.

Part V deals with the ballad, both the ballad proper and the modern ballad. The ballad form is something that can easily be reconstructed. The point to be made is that poetry is not form alone. Besides the form, what is needed is the authentic beat of blood to make the form a vividly felt imaginative experience restricting itself into a pattern.

(1) *Binnorie*, (2) *The wife of Usher's well*, (3) *Bonie Jean*, (4) *Love*, (5) *La Bell Dem Sans Mercie* and (5) *The Moorish King who Lost Granade* are as good as could be possible in this almost dead form of poetry.

Part VI consists of some representative Odes and part VII contains some Victorian poems. Part VIII, called "Light Verse", includes three poems representing a phase in the literary history of the nineteenth century. These are Lewis Carroll's *Humpty Dumpty's Song*, Edward Lear's *The Owl and the Pussy Cat*, and Browning's *Pied Piper of Hamelin*. These are poems for children and nonsense poems appealing to the Unconscious. As for Part IX, entitled *The Twentieth Century Poetry*, one feels that there is no new poetry as distinguished from something else. One may, therefore, follow a more satisfactory pursuit—namely, that of tracking down the "new note" of which Hardy speaks: "There is no new poetry; but the

new poet—if he carry the flame on further (and if not, he is no new poet) — — comes with a new note. And that new note it is that troubles the critical waters.” Hardy goes on further: “Poetry is emotion put into measure, The emotion must come by nature, but the measure can be acquired by art.” The poems included here do not appear to trouble critical waters much. Of course, they use a new rhythm, for example, the modern blank verse which does not respond to the regular beat of metre. It is what one might call Shakespeare’s “even road” “macadamized and made fit for the tempo of modern life. Robert Bridges’ *London Snow* is in the speech-rhythm, such as Eliot and other modern practitioners emphasize. The poems contained in this part should be approached in the light of these considerations. Part X, entitled, “The poetry of the modern Conciousness”, contains poems by Hopkins, Eliot, Auden, and C. D. Lewis—one poem by each of them—who share in common the revolt against the standards of contemporary civilization. The revolt would seem to throw back to Arnold’s *Dover Beach*, Fitzgerald’s *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*, Thomson’s *City of Dreadful Night*, Swinburne’s *Atlanta in Calydon*. Only a few quatrains of Fitzgerald have been taken here as a basis to point to the decantation of the same theme from Hopkins to C. Day Lewis. Each of these modern poems, therefore, gives a magnificent amplification to the other. These poems are very short, some of them consisting of only a few lines. Of course, they have called for critical notes, which have been made as exhaustive as possible. All the same, they are necessary because the tendency to avoid modern poetry in the textbooks would seem to have carried the reader into the rarefied atmosphere of the nineteenth century. An interest in



poetry, as Mr. Denys Thomson put it, must be concerned with the poetry of the present. It is difficult to agree with the view that students will not understand them. It is easy to say to them that all these poems are on one familiar theme and that the methods followed by the poets are different. After all, it is not what is said that matters in poetry, but *how* it is said. It is this 'how' which a teacher ought to ram home to the student if the complaints of a low standard in English are to be stilled.

One of the trends in modern poetry is to translate phenomena back into the terms of the soul of man. This trend has taken much complicated forms with the modern poets. However, part XI takes up poems by Emerson, Longfellow, and Whitman, who point to this going back to the soul of man. These poems are simpler than their counterparts in the recent poetry. This return to the soul of man can best be likened to the method of psychoanalysts analysing a dream. Moreover, these poems together with Tagore's *Dancing-Girl* and Sarojini Naidu's *In the Bazaars of Hyderabad* form part XI, entitled, *English Poetry outside England*.

It is the fond hope of the editors that this book is well-patterned. The comparative method has been used throughout, throwing into high relief such important aspects of poetry in general as communication, rhythm, diction, imagery, continuity and-what is more important-poetic process, that is, the way how the poet goes about his business. Incidentally, it is hoped that this selection will facilitate the work of the teacher in the higher classes.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

1. I am grateful to Miss Zia Durrani of Government College for Women who consented to the present arrangement of this book appearing under my name, her name being omitted by mistake from the title page of the typescript originally submitted to the University of Jammu & Kashmir. The much desired correction was considered to be tantamount to an alteration involving delay. If Miss Durrani had not shown a tremendous amount of self-abnegation in this matter, the book could not have been made available in time. However, the last paragraph of the Preface will make it clearer than ever that this book is to be associated with the 'editors' and, certainly, not with an editor. Miss Durrani gave the present pattern to this anthology of poetry through her independent criticisms. She is as much pleased as I am privileged to dedicate this book to my illustrious teacher, Professor Bonamy Dobrée, the intimate knowledge of whose literary views we delightfully shared between ourselves in our continual contact while the critical parts of this book were in preparation.

2. For permission to use copyright poems acknowledgements are due and are hereby tendered to: Messers. Chatto and Windus; Messers. Macmillan & Co.; Messers. Martin Secker, Ltd.; Oxford University Press; Messers. Faber and Faber; The Incorporated Society of Authors; the Executors of Water De La Mare; Mr. J. C. Squire; Professor C. Day Lewis.

3. I wish to express my deepest gratitude to my friend, Prof. S. L. Pandit for the keen interest he has taken in this book.

To my illustrious teacher,  
Professor Bonamy Dobrée



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PART I

ELIZABETHAN LYRICS.



AN EARNEST SUIT TO HIS UNKIND  
MISTRESS NOT TO FORSAKE HIM

And wilt thou leave me thus?  
Say nay! say nay! for shame!  
To save thee from the blame  
Of all my grief and grame.  
And wilt thou leave me thus?  
Say nay! say nay!

5

And wilt thou leave me thus?  
That hath loved thee so long?  
In wealth and woe among  
And is thy heart so strong  
As for to leave me thus?  
Say nay! say nay!

10

And wilt thou leave me thus?  
That hath given thee my heart  
Never for to depart.  
Neither for pain nor smart:  
And wilt thou leave me thus?  
Say nay! say nay!

15

And wilt thou leave me thus?  
And have no more pity,  
Of him that loveth thee?  
Alas! thy cruelty!  
And wilt thou leave me thus?  
Say nay! say nay!

20

*Sir Thomas Wyatt*  
(1503—1542)

## VOW TO LOVE FAITHFULLY.

Set me whereas the sun doth parch the green,  
Or where his beams do not dissolve the ice,  
In temperate heat where he is felt and seen;  
In presence prest of people, mad or wise;

Set me in high or yet in low degree,  
In longest night or in the shortest day,  
In clearest sky or where clouds thickest be,  
In lusty youth or when my hairs are grey.  
Set me in heaven, in earth, or else in hell.

In hill, or dale, or in the foaming flood;  
Thrall or at large, alive whereso I dwell,  
Sick or in health, in evil fame or good:  
Hers will I be, and only with this thought  
Content myself although my chance be nought.

*The Earl of Surrey*  
(1516—1547)

(Translated from Petrarch)

## TO THE MOON

With how sad steps, O Moon, thou climb'st the skies!  
How silently, and with how wan a face!  
What, may it be that even in heavenly place  
That busy archer his sharp arrows tries!  
Sure, if that long-with-love-acquainted eyes  
Can judge of love, thou feel'st a lover's case,  
I read it in thy looks; thy languisht grace,  
To me, that feel the like, thy state describes,  
That, even of fellowship, O Moon, tell me,  
Is constant love deem'd there but want of wit?  
Are beauties there as proud as here they be?  
Do they above love to be loved, and yet  
Those lovers scorn whom that love doth possess?  
Do they call virtue there ungratefulness?

*Sir Philip Sidney*  
(1554—1586)



## THE PASSIONATE SHEPHERD TO HIS LOVE.

Come, live with me and be my Love,  
And we will all the pleasures prove  
That hills and valleys, dales and fields,  
Or woods or steepy mountain yields.

And we will sit upon the rocks,  
And see the shepherds feed their flocks  
By shallow rivers, to whose falls  
Melodious birds sing madrigals.

And I will make thee beds of roses  
And a thousand fragrant posies:  
A cap of flowers, and a kirtle  
Embroidered all with leaves of myrtle.

A gown made of the finest wool,  
Which from our pretty lambs we pull;  
Fairlined slippers for the cold.  
With buckles of the purest gold.

A belt of straw and ivy-buds  
With coral clasps and amber studs:  
And if these pleasures may thee move,  
Come, live with me and be my Love.

The Shepherd swains shall dance and sing  
For thy delight each May morning:  
If these delights thy mind may move,  
Then live with me and be my Love.

*Christopher Marlowe*  
(1564—1593)



## SONNET XC

Then hate me when thou wilt; if ever, now;  
Now while the world is bent my deeds to cross,  
Join with the spite of Fortune, make me bow,  
And do not drop in for an after-loss;  
Ah, do not, when my heart hath scaped this sorrow,  
Come in the rearward of a conquer'd woe,  
Give not a windy night a rainy morrow,  
To linger out a purpos'd overthrow.  
If thou wilt leave me, do not leave me last  
When other petty griefs have done their spite,  
But in the onset come; so shall I taste  
At first the very worst of Fortune's might;  
And other strains of woe which now seem woe,  
Compared with loss of thee will not seem so.

(Shakespeare)

## SONG: TO CELIA

Drink to me only with thine eyes,  
And I will pledge with mine;  
Or leave a kiss but in the cup,  
And I'll not look for wine.  
The thirst that from the soul doth rise      5  
Doth ask a drink divine:  
But might I of Jove's nectar sup,  
I would not change for thine.

I sent thee late a rosy wreath,  
Not so much honouring thee,      10  
As giving it a hope that there  
It could not withered be.  
But thou thereon didst only breathe,  
And sent'st it back to me:  
Since when it grows, and smells, I swear,      15  
Not of itself, but thee.

*Ben Jonson*  
(1573—1637)

## WHEN THOU MUST HOME.

When thou must home to shades of underground,  
And there arrived, a new admired guest,  
The beauteous spirits do engirt thee round,  
White Iope, blithe Helen, and the rest,  
To hear the stories of thy finished love 5  
From that smooth tongue whose music hell can move,  
Then wilt thou speak of banqueting delights,  
Of masks and revels which sweet youth did make,  
Of tourneys and great challenges of knights,  
And all these triumphs for thy beauty's sake;  
When thou hast told these honours done to thee,  
Then tell, O tell, how thou didst murder me.

*Thomas Campion*  
(1619—? )

## TO BLOSSOMS

Fair pledges of a fruitful tree,  
Why do yo fall so fast?  
Your date is not so past,  
But you may stay yet here awhile  
To blush and gently smile,  
And go at last.

5

What, were ye born to be  
An hour or half's delight,  
And so to bid good-night?  
'Twas pity Nature brought ye forth  
Merely to show your worth,  
And lose you quite.

10

But you are lovely leaves, where we  
May read how soon things have  
Their end, though ne'er so brave:  
And after they have shown their pride  
Like you, awhile: they glide  
Into the grave.

15

*Herrick*  
(1591—1674)

## TO THE VIRGINS, TO MAKE MUCH OF TIME.

Gather ye Rose-buds while ye may,  
Old Time is still a-flying :  
And this same flower that smiles to-day,  
To-morrow will be dying.

The glorious lamp of heaven, the sun,  
The higher he's a-getting,  
The sooner will his race be run,  
And nearer he's to setting.

That age is best which is the first,  
When youth and blood are warmer ;  
But being spent, the worse, and worst  
Times still succeed the former.

Then be not coy, but use your time,  
And while ye may, go marry :  
For having lost but once your prime,  
You may for ever tarry.

*Herrick.*

## GO, LOVELY ROSE.

Go, lovely Rose !  
Tell her, that wastes her time and me,  
That now she knows,  
When I resemble her to thee,  
How sweet, and fair, she seems to be. 5

Tell her that's young,  
And shuns to have her graces spy'd,  
That had'st thou sprung  
In deserts where no men abide,  
Thou must have uncommended dy'd. 10

Small is the worth  
Of beauty from the light retir'd.  
Bid her come forth,  
Suffer herself to be desir'd,  
And not blush so to be admir'd. 15

Then die ! that she  
The common fate of all things rare  
May read in thee ;  
How small a part of time they share  
That are so wondrous sweet and fair !

*Edmund Waller*  
(1605—1687)



## FRIENDS DEPARTED.

They are all gone into the world of light !  
And I alone sit ling'ring here ;  
Their very memory is fair and bright,  
And my sad thoughts doth clear.

It glows and glitters in my cloudy breast  
Like stars upon some gloomy grove,  
Or those faint beams in which this hill is drest  
After the sun's remove.

I see them walking in an air of glory,  
Whose light doth trample on my days :  
My days, which are at best but dull and hoary,  
Mere glimmering and decays.

O holy Hope ! and high Humility,  
High as the Heavens above !  
These are your walks, and you have showed them me,  
To kindle my cold love.

Dear, beauteous Death ! the jewel of the Just,  
Shining nowhere, but in the dark ;  
What mysteries do lie beyond thy dust,  
Could man outlook that mark !

He that hath found some fledged bird's nest may know,  
At first sight, if the bird be flown ;  
But what fair well or grove he sings in now,  
That is to him unknown.

And yet as Angels in some brighter dreams 25  
Call to the soul, when man doth sleep;  
So some strange thoughts transcend our wonted themes,  
And into glory peep.

If a star were confined into a tomb,  
Her captive flames must needs turn up there; 30  
But when the hand that lock'd her up gives room,  
She'll shine through all the sphere.

O Father of eternal life, and all  
Created glories under Thee!  
Resume Thy spirit from this world of thrall 35  
Into true liberty.

Either disperse these mists, which blot and fill  
My perspective still as they pass:  
Or else remove me hence unto that hill,  
Where I shall need no glass. 40

*Henry Vaughan*  
(1621—1693)



## SONNET

Love is the peace whereto all thoughts do strive,  
Done and begun with all our powers in one;  
The first and last in us that is alive,  
End of the good, and therewith pleas'd alone;  
Perfection's spirit, Goddess of the mind,  
Passed through hope, desire, grief and fear;  
A simple goodness in the flesh refin'd,  
Which of the joys to come doth witness bear;  
Constant, because it sees no cause to vary,  
A quintessence of passions overthrown.  
Rais'd above all that change of objects carry,  
A nature by no other nature known:  
For Glory's of eternity a frame,  
That by all bodies else obscures her name.

*Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke  
(1554—1628)*



PART II

THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

AND

DRYDEN & POPE





## A VALEDICTION: forbidding mourning

As virtuous men passe mildly away,

And whisper to their soules, to goe,

Whilst some of their sad friends doe say,

The breath goes now, and some say, no:

So let us melt, and make no noise,

No teare-floods, nor sight tempests move,

T'were prophanation of our joyes

To tell the layetie our love.

Moving of th' earth brings harmes and feares,

Men reckon what it did and meant,

But trepidation of the spheares,

Though greater farre, is innocent.

Dull sublunary lovers love

(Whose soule is sense) cannot admit

Absence, because it doth remove

Those things which elemented it.

But we by a love, so much refin'd,

That our selves know not what it is,

Inter-assured of the mind,

Care lesse, eyes, lips, and hands to misse.

Our two soules therefore, which are one,

Though I must goe, endure not yet

A breach, but an expansion,

Like gold to ayery thinnesse beate.

If they be two, they are two so  
As stiffe twin compasses are two,  
Thy soule the fixt foot, makes no show  
To move, but doth, if th' other doe.

And though it in the centre sit,  
Yet when the other far doth rome,  
It leanes, and hearkens after it,  
And growes erect, as that comes home.

Such wilt thou be to mee, who must  
Like th' other foot, obliquely runne;  
Thy firmnes makes my circle just,  
And makes me end, where I begunne.

*John Donne*  
(1575—1631)

## M'PHERSON'S FAREWELL

Farewell, ye dungeons dark and strong,  
The wretch's destinie !  
M'Pherson's time will not be long  
On yonder gallows-tree.

Chorus:—Sae rantingly, sae wantonly,  
Sae dauntingly gaed he ;  
He play'd a spring and danc'd it round,  
Below the gallows-tree.

O what is death but parting breath ?  
On many a bloody plain  
I've dared his face, and in this place  
I'll scorn him yet again !

Chorus:—Sae rantingly, sae wantonly,  
Sae dauntingly gaed he ;  
He play'd a spring, and danc'd it round,  
Below the gallows-tree.

Untie these bands from off my hands,  
And bring to me my sword ;  
And there's no a man in all Scotland,  
But I'll brave him at a word.

Chorus:—Sae rantingly, etc.

I've liv'd a life of sturt and strife ;  
I die by treacherie :  
It burns my heart I must depart,  
And not avenged be.

Chorus:—Sae rantingly, etc.

Now farewell light, thou sunshine bright,

And all beneath the sky!

May coward shame distain his name,

The wretch that dare not die!

Chorus:—Sae rangtingly, etc.

*Robert Burns*  
(1759—1796)



## THE TIGER

Tiger! Tiger! burning bright  
In the forests of the night,  
What immortal hand or eye  
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies  
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?  
On what wings dare he aspire?  
What the hand dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder and what art  
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?  
And, when thy heart began to beat,  
What dread hand and what dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain?  
In what furnace was thy brain?  
What the anvil? What dread grasp  
Dare its deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spears,  
And water'd heaven with their tears,  
Did He smile His work to see?  
Did He who made the lamb make thee?

Tiger! Tiger! burning bright  
In the forests of the night,  
What immortal hand or eye,  
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

*William Blake*  
(1757—1827)

## NURSE'S SONG

When the voices of children are heard on the green,  
And laughing is heard on the hill,  
My heart is at rest within my breast,  
And every thing else is still.

"Then come home, my children, the sun is gone down, 5  
And the dew's of the night arise ;  
Come, come, leave off play, and let us away  
Till the morning appears in the skies."

"No, no, let us play, for it is yet day,  
And we cannot go to sleep ; 10  
Besides in the sky the little birds fly,  
And the hills are all cover'd with sheep."

"Well, well, go and play till the night fades away,  
And then go home to bed."

The little ones leaped and shouted and laughed 15  
And all the hills echoed.

*William Blake*

## A 'LUCY POEM'

She dwelt among the untrodden ways  
Beside the springs of Dove,  
A Maid whom there was none to praise  
And very few to love :

A violet by a mossy stone  
Half hidden from the eye !  
Fair as a star, when only one  
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know  
When Lucy ceased to be ;  
But she is in her grave, and oh,  
The difference to me !

*William Wordsworth*

## WHEN WE TWO PARTED

When we two parted

    In silence and tears,  
Half broken-hearted

    To sever for years,  
Pale grew thy cheek and cold,  
    Colder thy kiss ;  
Truly that hour foretold  
    Sorrow to this.

The dew of the morning  
    Sunk chill on my brow—  
It felt like the warning  
    Of what I feel now.

Thy vows are all broken,  
    And light is thy fame :  
I hear thy name spoken,  
    And share in its shame.

They name thee before me,  
    A knell to mine ear ;  
A shudder comes o'er me—  
    Why wert thou so dear ?  
They know not I knew thee,  
    Who knew thee too well :  
Long, long shall I rue thee,  
    Too deeply to tell.

In secret we met—  
    In silence I grieve,  
That thy heart could forget,  
    Thy spirit deceive.



If I should meet thee  
    After long years,  
How should I greet thee?  
    With silence and tears.

*Byron*  
(1788—1824)

## YOUTH AND AGE

There's not a joy the world can give like that it takes away  
When the glow of early thought declines in feeling's  
dull decay :

'Tis not on youth's smooth cheek the blush alone,  
which fades so fast,  
But the tender bloom of heart is gone, ere youth  
itself be past

Then the few whose spirits float above the wreck of  
happiness 5  
Are driven o'er the shoals of guilt, or ocean of  
excess :

The magnet of their course is gone, or only points  
in vain  
The shore to which their shiver'd sail shall never  
stretch again.

Then the mortal coldness of the soul like death  
itself comes down ;  
It cannot feel for other's woes, it dare not dream  
its own : 10

That heavy chill has frozen o'er the fountain of  
our tears,  
And though the eye may sparkle still, 'tis where  
the ice appears.

Though wit may flash from fluent lips, and mirth  
distract the breast,  
Through midnight hours that yield no more their  
former hope of rest ;

'Tis but as ivy-leaves around the ruin'd turret  
wreathe, 15  
All green and wildly fresh without, but worn and  
gray beneath.

Oh! could I feel as I have felt, or be what I  
have been,  
Or weep as I could once have wept o'er many a  
vanish'd scene,—  
As springs in deserts found seem sweet, all brackish  
though they be,  
So midst the wither'd waste of life, those tears  
would flow to me!

*Byron*

## ON FIRST LOOKING INTO CHAPMAN'S HOMER

Much have I travell'd in the realms of gold,  
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen ;  
Round many western islands have I been  
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.  
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told  
That deep-brow'd Homer ruled as his demesne :  
Yet never could I judge what men might mean  
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold :  
Then felt I like some watcher of the skies  
When a new planet swims into his ken ;  
Or like stout Cortez, when with wond'ring eyes  
He stared at the Pacific—and all his men  
Look'd at each other with a wild surmise—  
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

*John Keats*  
(1795—1821)



PART IV

SONGS FROM PLAYS



I

IT WAS A LOVER

It was a lover and his lass,

With a hey and a ho, and a hey nonino,  
That o'er the green corn-field did pass

In the spring time, the only pretty ring time,  
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding ding; 5  
Sweet lovers love the spring.

Between the acres of the rye,

With a hey and a ho, and a hey nonino,  
These pretty country folks would lie 10  
In the spring time, etc.

This carol they began that hour,

With a hey and a ho, and a hey nonino,  
How that a life was but a flower  
In the spring-time, etc. 15

And therefore take the present time

With a hey and a ho, and a hey nonino,  
For love is crowned with the prime

In the spring time, the only pretty ring time.  
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding ding;  
Sweet lovers love the spring. 20

*William Shakespeare*

## II

## ARIEL'S SONGS

## I

Come unto these yellow sands,  
And then take hands :  
Courtsied when you have, and kist  
The wild waves whist :  
Foot it featly, here and there ;  
And, sweet sprites, the burthen bear.  
Hark, hark !

Burthen (dispersedly) : Bow-wow.  
The watch-dogs bark :

Burthen (dispersedly) : Bow-wow.  
Hark, hark ! I hear  
The strain of strutting chanticleer  
Cry Cock-a-diddle-dow.

## II

Full fathom five thy father lies :  
Of his bones are coral made ;  
Those are pearls that were his eyes :  
Nothing of him that doth fade

But doth suffer a sea change  
Into something rich and strange.

Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell :

Burthen : Ding-dong.

Hark ! now I hear them,—Ding-dong, bell.

*William Shakespeare*

## III

## CUPID AND MY CAMPASPE

Cupid and my Campaspe played  
At cards for kisses—Cupid paid,  
He takes his quiver, bow and arrows,  
His mother's doves and team of sparrows :  
Loses them too ; then down he throws  
The coral of his lip, the rose  
Growing on's cheek (but none knows how) ;  
With these the crystal of his brow,  
And then the dimple of his chin—  
All these did my Campaspe win.  
At last he set her both his eyes.—  
She won, and Cupid blind did rise.  
O Love, has she done this to thee ?  
What shall, alas ! become of me ?

*John Lyly*  
(1554—1606)



## IV

## CALL FOR THE ROBIN—REDBREAST

Call for the robin-redbreast and the wren,  
Since o'er shady groves they hover,  
And with leaves and flowers do cover  
The friendless bodies of unburied men.  
Call unto his funeral dole  
The ant, the field-mouse, and the mole,  
To rear him hillocks that shall keep him warm,  
And (when gay tombs are robb'd) sustain no harm;  
But keep the wolf far thence, that's foe to men,  
For with his nails he 'll dig them up again.

*John Webster*  
(1580?—1630?)

## V

## FROM MARRIAGE A-LA-MODE

## 1.

Why should a foolish Marriage Vow  
Which long ago was made,  
Oblige us to each other now  
When Passion is decay'd?  
We Lov'd, and we lov'd as long as we cou'd,  
Till our Love was lov'd out in us both:  
But our Marriage is dead, when the Pleasure is fled:  
'Twas Pleasures first made it an Oath.

## 2.

If I have Pleasures for a Friend,  
And farther Love in store,  
What Wrong has he whose Joys did end,  
And who cou'd give no more?  
'Tis a madness that he  
Shou'd be jealous of me,  
Or that I shou'd bar him of another:  
For all we can gain is to give our selves pain,  
When neither can hinder the other.

*John Dryden*

## VI

## THE POET'S DREAM

On a Poet's lips I slept  
Dreaming like a love-adept  
In the sound his breathing kept;  
Nor seeks nor finds he mortal blisses,  
But feeds on the aerial kisses  
Of shapes that haunt Thought's wildernesses.  
He will watch from dawn to gloom  
The lake-reflected sun illumine  
The yellow bees in the ivy-bloom,  
Nor heed nor see what things they be—  
But from these create he can  
Forms more real than living Man,  
Nurslings of Immortality!

*P. B. Shelley*

VII  
HYMN TO ASIA

That light whose smile kindles the Universe,  
That beauty in which all thing work and move.

( *Adonais* )

Life of Life! thy lips enkindle

With their love the breath between them;  
And thy smiles before they dwindle  
Make the cold air fire; then screen them  
In those looks, where whoso gazes  
Faints, entangled in their mazes.

Child of Light! thy limbs are burning

Thro' the vest which seems to hide them;  
As the radiant lines of morning  
Thro' the clouds ere they divide them;  
And this atmosphere divinest  
Shrouds thee wheresoe'er thou shinest.

Fair are others; none beholds thee,

But thy voice sounds low and tender  
Like the fairest, for it folds thee  
From the sight, that liquid splendour,  
And all feel, yet see thee never,  
As I feel now, lost for ever!

Lamp of Earth! where'er thou movest

Its dim shapes are clad with brightness,  
And the souls of whom thou lovest  
Walk upon the winds with lightness,  
Till they fail, as I am failing,  
Dizzy, lost, yet unbewailing!

*Shelley*

## VIII

## ESTRILD (sings)

Had I wist, quoth spring to the swallow,  
That earth could forget me, kissed  
By summer, and lured to follow  
Down ways that I know not, I,  
My heart should have waxed not high:  
Mid March would have seen me die,  
Had I wist.

Had I wist, O spring, said the swallow,  
That hope was a sunlit mist  
And the faint light heart of it hollow,  
Thy woods had not heard me sing,  
Thy winds had not known my wing;  
It had faltered ere thine did, spring,  
Had I wist.

*Swinburne*



PART V

THE BALLADS



## THE WIFE OF USHER'S WELL

There lived a wife at Usher's well,  
And a wealthy wife was she ;  
She had three stout and stalwart sons,  
And sent them o'er the sea.

They hadna been a week from her,  
A week but barely ane,  
When word came to the carline wife  
That her three sons were gane.

They hadna been a week from her,  
A week but barely three,  
When word came to the carline wife  
That her sons she'd never see.

'I wish the wind may never cease,  
Nor fashes in the flood,  
Till my three sons come hame to me,  
In earthly flesh and blood !'

It fell about the Martinmas,  
When nights are lang and mirk,  
The carline wife's three sons came hame,  
And their hats were o' the birk.

It neither grew in syke nor ditch,  
Nor yet in ony sheugh ;  
But at the gates o' Paradise  
That birk grew fair enough.

'Blow up the fire, my maidens !  
Bring water from the well !  
For a' my house shall feast this night,  
Since my three sons are well.'

And she has made to them a bed,  
She's made it large and wide ;  
And she's ta'en her mantle her about,  
Sat down at the beside.

Up then crew the red, red cock.  
And up and crew the gray ;  
The eldest to the youngest said,  
"Tis time we were away.'

The cock he hadna craw'd but once,  
And clapp'd his wings at a',  
When the youngest to the eldest said,  
'Brother, we must awa.'

'The cock doth crawl, the day doth daw,  
The channerin' worm doth chide ;  
Gin we be miss'd out o' our place,  
A sair pain we maun bide.

'Lie still, lie still but a little wee while,  
Lie still but if we may ;  
Gin my mother should miss us when she wakes,  
She'll go mad ere it be day.'

'Fare ye weel, my mother dear !  
Fareweel to barn and byre !  
And fare ye weel, the bonny lass  
That kindless my mother's fire.'

## BINNORIE

There was twa sisters in a bower,

Binnorie, O Binnorie :

There came a knight to be their wooer,

By the bonnie mill-dams o' Binnorie.

He courted the eldest wi' glove an' ring ;

Binnorie, O Binnorie :

But he loved the youngest abune a' thing.

By the bonnie mill-dams o' Binnorie.

He courted the eldest wi' brooch and knife ;

But loved the youngest as his life.

The eldest she was vexed sair,

And much envied her sister fair.

Into her bower she couldna rest ;

Wi' grief and spite she almost brast.

Upon a morning fair and clear.

She cried upon her sister dear :

"O Sister come to yon sea-strand,

And see our father's ships come to land."

She's ta'en her by the milk-white hand,

And led her down to yon sea-strand.

The youngest stood upon a stane,

The eldest came and threw her in.

She took her by the middle sma',

And dash'd her bonnie back to the jaw.



"O sister, sister, tak my hand,  
And I'se mak you heir to a' my land.

"O sister, sister, tak my middle,  
And ye'se get my gowd and gowden girdle.

"O sister, sister, save my life,  
And I swear I 'se never be nae man's wife."

"Foul fa' the hand that I should tak,  
It's twined me and my world's mak.

"Your cherry cheeks an' yellow hair,  
Gars me gae maiden for evermair."

Sometimes she sank, sometimes she swam,  
Till she came down yon bonnie mill-dam.

Oh, out it came the miller's son,  
And saw the fair maid swimmin' in.

"O father, father, draw your dam;  
Here's either a mermaid or a swan."

The miller quickly drew the dam,  
And there he found a drowned woman.

You couldna see her yellow hair  
For gold and pearl that were so rare.

You couldna see her middle sma'  
For gowden girdle that was sae braw.

You couldna see her fingers white,  
For gowden rings that were sae gryte.

An' by there came a harper fine,  
That harped to the king at dine.

When he looked that lady upon,  
He sighed and made a heavy moan.

He's ta'en three locks o' her yellow hair,  
And wi' them strung his harp sae fair.

The first tune he did play and sing,  
Was "Farewell to my father the king!"

The nextin tune that he played syne  
Was "Farewell to my mother the queen!"

The lasten tune that he played then

Binnorie, O Binnorie,

Was "Wae to my sister, fair Ellen!"

By the bonnie mill-dams o' Binnorie.

*Old Ballad*

## BONIE JEAN

There was a lass, and she was fair,  
At kirk and market to be seen;  
When a' our fairest maids were met,  
The fairest maid was bonie Jean.

And ay she wrought her mammie's wark,  
And ay she sang sae merrilie;  
The blythest bird upon the bush  
Had ne'er a lighter heart than she.

But hawks will rob the tender joys  
That bless the little lintwhite's nest;  
And frost will blight the fairest flowers,  
And love will break the soundest rest.

Young Robie was the brawest lad,  
The flower and pride of a' the glen;  
And he had owsen, sheep, and kye,  
And wanton naigies nine or ten.

He gaed wi' Jeanie to the tryste,  
He danc'd wi' Jeanie on the down;  
And, lang ere witless Jeanie wist,  
Her heart was tint, her peace was stown!

As in the bosom of the stream,  
The moonbeam dwells at dewy e'en;  
So trembling, pure, was tender love  
Within the breast of bonie Jean.

And now she works her mammie's wark,  
And ay she sighs wi' care and pain:

Ye wist na what her ail might be,  
Or what wad make her weel again.

But did na Jeanie's heart loup light,  
And did na joy blink in her e'e;  
As Robie tauld a tale of love:  
Ae e'enin on the lily lea?

The sun was sinking in the west,  
The birds sang sweet in ilka grove;  
His cheek to hers he fondly laid,  
And whisper'd thus his tale o' love:

"O Jeanie fair, I lo'e thee dear;  
O canst thou think to fancy me,  
Or wilt thou leave thy mammie's cot  
And learn to tent the farms wi' me?

"At barn or byre thou shalt na drudge,  
Or naething else to trouble thee;  
But stray amang the heather-bells,  
And tent the waving corn wi' me."

Now what could artless Jeanie do?  
She had nae will to say him na:  
At length she blush'd a sweet consent,  
And love was ay between them twa.

*Robert Burns*



## LOVE

All thoughts, all passions, all delights,  
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,  
All are but ministers of Love,  
And feed his sacred flame.

Oft in my waking dreams do I  
Live o'er again that happy hour,  
When midway on the mount I lay  
Beside the ruined tower.

The moonshine, stealing o'er the scene,  
Had blended with the lights of eve;  
And she was there, my hope, my joy,  
My own dear Genevieve!

She lean'd against the armed man,  
The statue of the armed knight;  
She stood and listened to my lay,  
Amid the lingering light.

Few sorrows hath she of her own,  
My hope! my joy! my Genevieve!  
She loves me best, whene'er I sing  
The songs that make her grieve.

I played a soft and doleful air,  
I sang an old and moving story—  
An old rude song, that suited well  
That ruin wild and hoary.

She listened with a flitting blush,  
With downcast eyes and modest grace;



For well she knew, I could not choose  
But gaze upon her face.

I told her of the Knight that wore  
Upon his shield a burning brand ;  
And that for ten long years he wooed  
The Lady of the Land.

I told her how he pined ; and ah !  
The deep, the low, the pleading tone  
With which I sang another's love  
Interpreted my own.

She listened with a flitting blush,  
With downcast eyes, and modest grace ;  
And she forgave me, that I gazed  
Too fondly on her face !

But when I told the cruel scorn  
That crazed that bold and lovely Knight,  
And that he crossed the mountain-woods,  
Nor rested day nor night ;

That sometimes from the savage den,  
And sometimes from the darksome shade,  
And sometimes starting up at once  
In green and sunny glade—

There came and looked him in the face  
An angel beautiful and bright ;  
And that he knew it was Fiend,  
This miserable Knight !

And that unknowing what he did,  
He leaped amid a murderous band,

And saved from outrage worse than death  
The Lady of the land ;—

And how she wept, and clasped his knees;  
And how she tended him in vain ;  
And ever strove to expiate  
The scorn that crazed his brain ;—

And that she nursed him in a cave  
And how his madness went away,  
When on the yellow forest-leaves  
A dying man he lay ;

His dying words—but when I reached  
That tenderest strain of all the ditty,  
My faltering voice and pausing harp  
Disturbed her soul with pity !

All impulses of soul and sense  
Had thrilled guileless Genevieve;  
The music and the doleful tale,  
The rich and balmy eve :

And hopes, and fears that kindle hope,  
An undistinguishable throng,  
And gentle wishes long subdued,  
Subdued and cherished long !

She wept with pity and delight,  
She blushed with love, and virgin shame ;  
And like the murmur of a dream,  
I heard her breathe my name.

Her bosom heaved—she stepped aside,  
As conscious of my look she step—  
Then suddenly, with timorous eye  
She fled to me and wept.

She half enclosed me with her arms,  
She press'd me with a meek embrace;  
And bending back her head, looked up,  
And gazed upon my face.

'Twas partly love, and partly fear,  
And partly 'twas a bashful art,  
That I might rather feel, than see,  
The swelling of her heart.

I calmed her fears, and she was calm,  
And told her love with virgin pride;  
And so I won my Genevieve,  
My bright and beauteous Bride.

*Samuel Taylor Coleridge*

## LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI

'O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,  
Alone and palely loitering?  
The sedge is wither'd from the lake,  
And no birds sing.

'O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,  
So haggard and so woe-begone?  
The squirrel's granary is full,  
And the harvest's done.

'I see a lily on thy brow,  
With anguish moist and fever-dew;  
And on thy cheek a fading rose  
Fast withereth too.'

'I met a lady in the meads  
Full beautiful—a faery's child,  
Her hair was long, her foot was light,  
And her eyes were wild.

'I made a garland for her head,  
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;  
She look'd at me as she did love,  
And made a sweet moan.

'I set her on my pacing steed  
And nothing else saw all day long,  
For sideways would she lean, and sing  
A faery's song.

'She found me roots of relish sweet,  
And honey wild and manna dew,

And sure in language strange she said,  
"I love thee true!"

'She took me to her elfin grot,  
And there she wept and sigh'd full sore;  
And there I shut her wild, wild eyes  
With kisses four.

'And there she lulled me asleep  
And there I dream'd - Ah! woe betide!  
That latest dream I ever dream'd  
On the cold hill's side.

'I saw pale kings, and princes too,  
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all;  
Who cried- "La belle Dame sans Merci  
Hath thee in thrall!"

'I saw their starved lips in the gloam  
With horrid warning gaped wide,  
And I awoke and found me here  
On the cold hill's side.

'And this is why I sojourn here,  
Alone and palely loitering,  
Though the sedge is wither'd from the lake,  
And no birds sing.'

*John Keats*



## OF THE MOORISH KING WHO LOST GRANADA

When King Chico of Granada lost his Kingdom and  
All his horsemen, all the flower of the Moors, rode  
With his mother, an Athenian slave, a Christian,  
And they rode the City through.

As the bridge was gone, they forded, through a  
That the King's gold shoes and stirrups were  
Then they climbed into the mountains, to the  
Bitter stony was the road.

At a sharp turn in the trackway, high aloft, King  
Turned, and gazed down into distance where  
Palaces in orange groves, and minarets white-fingered  
Where his happiness had been.

Then he spoke: "O proud Granada, all my comfort,  
High and rich, and built with glory, baths and  
There I see you, parted from me, City mine, my  
Now a City of my dreams.

From afar I look upon you ; I shall never see  
you nearer,  
For the Wheel of Fortune alters, and unlucky  
dice are thrown.  
Yesterday, I judged as Sovereign at the Gateway  
of Elvira ;  
Now, have nothing of my own".

Saying this, he fell, from sorrow, in the rocky  
trackway, weeping.  
Then his Mother with the vanguard turned, and  
asked, "Why they delayed ?"  
"Queen, the King the beheld Granada, now no longer  
in his keeping,  
And his spirit was dismayed.

Pain afflicted him, O Lady, to behold his land forsaken"  
"So?" the Mother answered, "Truly, it is well  
that he should weep...  
Weep in anguish, as a woman, to behold his  
Kingdom taken,  
That as men be could not keep."

*John Masefield*  
(Born 1876)



**PART VI**

**THE ODES**





## ODE TO EVENING

If aught of oaten stop, or pastoral song,  
May hope, chaste Eve, to soothe thy modest ear,  
Like thy own solemn springs,  
Thy springs, and dying gales;

O nymph reserv'd, while now the bright-haired Sun  
Sits in yon western tent, whose cloudy skirts,  
With brede ethereal wove,  
O'erhang his wavy bed:

Now air is hush'd save where the weak-eyed bat  
With short shrill shriek flits by on leathern wing,  
Or where the beetle winds  
His small but sullen horn,

As oft he rises midst the twilight path,  
Against the pilgrim borne in heedless hum:  
Now teach me, maid compos'd,  
To breathe some soften'd strain,  
Whose numbers stealing through thy darkening vale,  
May not unseemly with its stillness suit,  
As musing slow, I hail  
Thy genial lov'd return!

For when thy folding star arising shows  
His paly circlet, at his warning lamp  
The fragrant hours, and elves  
Who slept in buds the day,

And many a nymph who wreathes her brows with sedge,  
And sheds the freshening dew and, lovelier still,  
    The pensive pleasures sweet,  
    Prepare thy shadowy car.

Then let me rove some wild and heathy scene,  
Or find some ruin midst its dreary dells,  
    Whose walls more awful nod  
    By thy religious gleams.

Or if chill blustering winds, or driving rain,  
Prevent my willing feet, be mine the hut,  
    That from the mountain's side  
    Views wilds, and swelling floods,

And hamlets brown, and dim-discovered spires,  
And hears their simple bell, and marks o'er all  
    Thy dewy fingers draw  
    The gradual dusky veil.

While Spring shall pour his showers, as oft he wont,  
And bathe thy breathing tresses, meekest Eve!  
    While Summer loves to sport  
    Beneath thy lingering light:

While fallow Autumn fills thy lap with leaves;  
Or Winter, yelling through the troublous air,  
    Affrights thy shrinking train,  
    And rudely rends thy robes:—

So long, regardful of thy quiet rule,  
Shall Fancy, Friendship, Science, smiling Peace,  
    Thy gentlest influence own,  
    And love thy favourite name!

*Collins*  
(1721—1759)

## TO AUTUMN

SEASON of mists and mellow fruitfulness !

Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun ;  
Conspiring with him how to load and bless  
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eves run ;  
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,  
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core ;  
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells  
With a sweet kernel ; to set budding more,  
And still more, later flowers for the bees,  
Until they think warm days will never cease ;  
For summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy cells.

Who hath not seen Thee oft amid thy store ?

Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find  
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,  
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind ;  
Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,  
Drowsed with the fume of poppies, while thy hook  
Spares the next swath and its twined flowers ;  
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep  
Steady thy laden head across a brook ;  
Or by a cider-press, with patient look  
Thou watchest the last oozings, hours by hours.

Where are the songs of Spring ? Ay, where are they ?

Think not of them,—thou hast thy music too,—  
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,  
And touch the sutbbble-plains with rosy hue ;  
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn  
Among the river-sallows, borne aloft  
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies :

And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;  
Hedge-cricket sing, and now with treble soft  
The redbreast whistles from a garden-croft;  
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

*John Keats*  
(1795—1821)



## TO AUTUMN

## I

I saw old Autumn in the misty morn  
Stand shadowless like Silence, listening  
To silence, for no lonely bird would sing  
Into his hollow ear from woods forlorn,  
Nor lowly hedge nor solitary thorn;—  
Shaking his languid locks all dewy bright  
With tangled gossamer that fell by night,  
Pearling his coronet of golden corn.

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## II

Where are the songs of summer?—With the sun,  
Oping the dusky eyelids of the south,  
Till shade and silence waken up as one,  
And Morning sings with a warm odorous mouth.  
Where are the merry birds?—Away, away,  
On panting wings through the inclement skies,  
Lest owls should prey  
Undazzled at noon-day,  
And tear with horny beak their lustrous eyes.

10

15

## III

Where are the blooms of Summer?—In the west,  
Blushing their last to the last sunny hours,  
When the mild Eve by sudden Night is prest  
Like tearful Proserpine, snatch'd from her flow'rs  
To a most gloomy breast.

20

Where is the pride of Summer,—the green prime:—  
The many, many leaves all twinkling?—Three



On the moss'd elm; three on the naked lime  
Trembling,—and one upon the old oak tree!

Where is the Dryads' immortality?—  
Gone into mournful cypress and dark yew,  
Or wearing the long gloomy Winter through  
In the smooth holly's green eternity.

## IV

The squirrel gloats on his accomplished hoard,  
The ants have brimm'd their garner with ripe grain,

And honey bees have stor'd  
The sweets of Summer in their luscious dells;  
The swallows all have wing'd across the main;  
But here the Autumn melancholy dwells,

And sighs her tearful spells  
Amongst the sunless shadows of the plain.

Alone, alone,  
Upon a mossy stone,  
She sits and reckons up the dead and gone  
With the last leaves for a love-rosary,  
Whilst all the wither'd world looks drearily,  
Like a dim picture of the drowned past  
In the hush'd mind's mysterious far away,  
Doubtful what ghostly thing will steal the last  
Into that distance, gray upon the gray.

## V

O go and sit with her, and be o'ershaded  
Under the languid downfall of her hair!  
She wears a coronal of flowers faded  
Upon her forehead; and a face of care;—

There is enough of wither'd everywhere  
To make her bower,—and enough of gloom ;  
There is enough of sadness to invite,  
If only for the rose that died, whose doom 55  
Is Beauty's,—she that with the living bloom  
Of conscious cheeks most beautifies the light :—  
There is enough of sorrowing, and quite  
Enough of bitter fruits the earth doth bear,—  
Enough of chilly droppings for her bowl ; 60  
Enough of fear and shadowy despair,  
To frame her cloudy prison for the soul !

*Thomas Hood*  
(1799—1845)



PART VII

THE VICTORIANS





## PART II

### THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY AND DRYDEN AND POPE ( CRITICISM )



## "IF LOVE BE LOVE"

In Love, if Love be Love, if Love be ours,  
Faith and unfaith can ne'er be equal powers :  
Unfaith in aught is want of faith in all.

It is the little rift within the lute,  
That by-and-by will make the music mute,  
And ever widening slowly silence all.

The little rift within the lover's lute,  
Or little pitted speck in garner'd fruit,  
That rotting inward slowly moulders all.

It is not worth the keeping : let it go :  
But shall it ? answer, darling, answer, no.  
But trust me not at all or all in all.

*Lord Tennyson*

## BOOT AND SADDLE

Boot, saddle, to horse and away !  
Rescue my Castle before the hot day  
Brightens to blue from the silvery grey,

(Chorus) Boot, saddle, to horse, and away !

Ride past the suburbs, asleep as you'd say ;  
Many's the friend there will listen and pray  
"God's luck to gallants that strike up the lay—

(Chorus) Boot, saddle, to horse, and away !"

Forty miles off, like a roebuck at bay,  
Flouts Castle Brancepeth the Roundheads' array :  
Who laughs, "Good fellows ere this, by my fay,

(Chorus) Boot, saddle, to horse, and away !"

Who? My wife Gertrude ; that, honest and gay,  
Laughs when you talk of surrendering, "Nay !  
I've better counsellors, what counsel they ?

(Chorus) Boot, saddle, to horse, and away !"

*Robert Browning*  
(1812—1889)

HOW THEY BROUGHT THE GOOD NEWS  
FROM GHENT TO AIX

I sprang to the stirrup, and Joris, and he;  
I galloped, Dirck galloped, we galloped all three;  
"Good speed!" cried the watch, as the gate-bolts undrew;  
"Speed!" echoed the wall to us galloping through;  
Behind shut the postern, the lights sank to rest,  
And into the midnight we galloped abreast.

Not a word to each other; we kept the great pace  
Neck by neck, stride by stride, never changing our  
place;

I turned in my saddle and made its girths tight,  
Then shortened each stirrup and set the pique right,  
Rebuckled the check-strap, chained slacker the bit,  
Nor galloped less steadily Roland a whit.

'Twas moonset at starting; but while we drew near  
Lokeren the cocks crew, and twilight dawned clear;  
At Boom, a great yellow star came out to see;  
At Duffeld, 'twas morning as plain as could be;  
And from Mecheln church steeple we heard the half-  
chime,

So Joris brake silence with "Yet there is time!"

At Aershot, up leaped of a sudden the sun,  
And against him the cattle stood black every one,  
To stare through the mist at us galloping past,  
And I saw my stout galloper Roland at last,  
With resolute shoulders, each butting away  
The haze, as some bluff river headland its spray;



And his low head and crest, just one sharp ear bent  
back

For my voice, and the other pricked out on his track;  
And one eye's black intelligence—ever that glance  
O'er its white edge at me, his own master, askance!  
And the thick heavy spume-flakes which aye and anon  
His fierce lips shook upwards in galloping on.

By Hasselt, Dirck groaned; and cried Joris, "Stay spur!  
Your Roos galloped bravely, the fault's not in her,  
We'll remember at Aix"—for one heard the quick  
wheeze

Of her chest, saw the stretched neck and staggering  
knees,

And sunk tail, and horrible heave of the flank,  
As down on her haunches she shuddered and sank.

So we were left galloping, Joris and I,  
Past Looz and past Tongres, no cloud in the sky;  
The broad sun above laughed a pitiless laugh,  
'Neath our feet broke the brittle bright stubble like  
chaff:

Till over by Dalhem a dome spire sprang white,  
And "Gallop," gasped Joris, for Aix is in sight!"

"How they'll greet us!" and all in a moment his roan  
Rolled neck and croup over, lay dead as a stone;  
And there was my Roland to bear the whole weight  
Of the news which alone could save Aix from her  
fate,

With his nostrils like pits full of blood to the brim,  
And with circles of red for his eye-sockets' rim.

Then I cast loose my buff-coat, each holster let fall,  
Shook off both my jack-boots, let go belt and all,  
Stood up in the stirrup, leaned, patted his ear,  
Called my Roland his pet name, my horse without  
peer ;

Clapped my hands, laughed and sang, any noise, bad  
or good,

Till at length into Aix Roland galloped, and stood.

And all I remember is friends flocking round,  
As I sat with his head 'twixt my knees on the ground,  
And no voice but was praising this Roland of mine,  
As I poured down his throat our last measure of wine,  
Which (the burgesses voted by common consent)  
Was no more than his due who brought good news  
from Ghent.

*Robert Browning*  
(1812—1889)

## TO THE MOON

"What have you looked at, Moon,  
In your time,  
Now long past your prime?"

"O, I have looked at, often looked at  
Sweet, sublime,  
Sore thing, shudderful, night and noon  
In my time."

"What have you mused on, Moon,  
In your day,  
So aloof, so far away?"

"O, I have mused on, often mused on  
Growth, decay,  
Nations alive, dead, mad, asworn,  
In my day!"

"Have you much wondered, Moon,  
On your rounds,  
Self-wrapt, beyond Earth's bounds?"

"Yea, I have wondered, often wondered  
At the sounds  
Reaching me of the human tune  
On my rounds."

"What do you think of it, Moon,  
As you go?  
Is Life much, or no?"

"O, I think of it, often I think of it  
As a show  
God ought surely to shut up soon,  
As I go."

*Thomas Hardy*  
(1840—1929)

PART VIII

LIGHT VERSE





## HUMPTY DUMPTY'S SONG

In winter, when the fields are white,  
I sing this song for your delight—

In spring, when woods are getting green,  
I'll try and tell you what I mean,

In summer, when the days are long,  
Perhaps you'll understand the song:

In autumn, when the leaves are brown,  
Take pen and ink, and write it down.

I sent a message to the fish:  
I told them 'This is what I wish.'

The little fishes of the sea  
They sent an answer back to me.

The little fishes' answer was  
'We cannot do it, sir, because —'

I sent to them again to say  
'It will be better to obey.'

The fishes answered with a grin  
'Why, what a temper you are in!'

I told them once, I told them twice:  
They would not listen to advice.

I took a kettle large and new,  
Fit for the deed I had to do.

My heart went hop, my heart went thump;  
I filled the Kettle at the pump.

Then some one came to me and said  
'The little fishes are in bed.'

I said to him, I said it plain,  
'Then you must wake them up again.'

I said it very loud and clear;  
I went and shouted in his ear.

But he was very stiff and proud;  
He said 'you needn't shout so loud!'

And he was very proud and stiff;  
He said 'I'd go and wake them, if—'

I took a corkscrew from the shelf:  
I went to wake them up myself.

And when I found the door was locked,  
I pulled and pushed and kicked and knocked.

And when I found the door was shut  
I tried to turn the handle, but—

*Charles Lutwidge Dodgson*  
(*Lewis Carroll*)  
(1832—1898)

## THE OWL AND THE PUSSY-CAT

The owl and the Pussy-cat went to sea  
In a beautiful pea-green boat,  
They took some honey, and plenty of money  
Wrapped up in a five-pound note.  
The Owl looked up to the stars above,  
And sang to a small guitar,  
'O lovely Pussy! O Pussy, my love,  
What a beautiful Pussy, you are,  
You are,  
You are!

What a beautiful pussy you are!  
Pussy said to the Owl, 'You elegant fowl!  
How charmingly sweet you sing!  
O let us be married! too long we have tarred:  
But what shall we do for a ring?'  
They sailed away, for a year and a day,  
To the land where the Bong-Tree grows,  
And there in a wood a Piggy-wig stood,  
With a ring at the end of his nose,  
His nose,  
His nose!

With a ring at the end of his nose.  
'Dear Pig, are you willing to sell for one shilling  
Your ring?' Said the Piggy, 'I will.'  
So they took it away, and were married next day  
By the Turkey who lives on the hill.  
They dined on mince, and slices of quince,  
Which they ate with a runcible spoon;  
And hand in hand, on the edge of the sand

They danced by the light of the moon,  
The moon,  
The moon,

They danced by the light of the moon.

*Edward Lear*  
1812—1888



## THE PIED PIPER OF HAMELIN

## I

HAMELIN Town's in Brunswick,  
By famous Hanover city ;  
The river Weser, deep and wide,  
Washed its wall on the southern side ;  
A pleasanter spot you never spied ;  
But, when begins my ditty,  
Almost five hundred years ago,  
To see the townfolk suffer so  
From vermin, was a pity.

## II

Rats !  
They fought the dogs, and killed the cats,  
And bit the babies in the cradles,  
And ate the cheeses out of the vats,  
And licked the soup from the cook's own ladles,  
Split open the kegs of salted sprats,  
Made nests inside men's Sunday hats,  
And even spoiled the women's chats,  
By drowning their speaking  
With shrieking and squeaking  
In fifty different sharps and flats.

## III

At last the people in a body  
To the Town Hall came flocking :  
"'Tis clear," cried they, "our Mayor's a noddy ;  
And as for our Corporation — shocking



To think we buy gowns lined with ermine  
For dolts that can't or won't determine  
What's best to rid us of our vermin!  
You hope, because you're old and obese,  
To find in the furry civic robe ease?

Rouse up, Sirs! Give your brains a racking  
To find the remedy we're lacking,  
Or, sure as fate, we'll send you packing!"  
At this the Mayor and Corporation  
Quaked with a mighty consternation.

## IV

An hour they sate in council;

At length the Mayor broke silence;  
"For a guilder I'd my ermine gown sell;

I wish I were a mile hence!  
It's easy to bid one rack one's brain—  
I'm sure my poor head aches again,  
I've scratched it so, and all in vain.  
Oh for a trap, a trap, a trap!"

Just as he said this, what should hap  
At the chamber door but a gentle tap?

"Bless us?" cried the Mayor, "what's that?"  
(With the Corporation as he sat,

Looking little though wonderous fat;  
Nor brighter was his eye, nor moister  
Than a too-long opened oyster,  
Save when at noon his paunch grew mutinous  
For a plate of turtle green and glutinous.)

"Only a scraping of shoes on the mat?  
Anything like the sound of a rat  
Makes my heart go pit-a-pit!"

## V

"Come in!"—the Mayor cried, looking bigger :  
 And in did come the strangest figure !  
 His queer long coat from heel to head  
 Was a half of yellow and half of red ;  
 And he himself was tall and thin,  
 With sharp blue eyes, each like a pin,  
 And light loose hair, yet swarthy skin,  
 No tuft on cheek nor beard on chin,  
 But lips where smiles went out and in—  
 There was no guessing his kith and kin !  
 And nobody could enough admire  
 The tall man and his quaint attire :  
 Quoth one : "It's as my great-grandsire,  
 Starting up at the Trump of Doom's tone,  
 Had walked this way from his painted tomb-stone !"

## VI

He advanced to the council-table :  
 And, "Please your honours," said he, "I'm able,  
 By means of a secret charm, to draw  
 All creatures living beneath the sun,  
 That creep or swim or fly or run,  
 After me so as you never saw !  
 And I chiefly use my charm  
 On creatures that do people harm,  
 The mole and toad and newt and viper ;  
 And people call me the Pied Piper."  
 (And here they noticed round his neck  
 A scarf of red and yellow stripe,  
 To match with his coat of the self-same cheque ;

And at the scarf's end hung a pipe ;  
And his fingers, they noticed, were ever straying  
As if impatient to be playing  
Upon this pipe, as low it dangled  
Over his vesture so old-fangled.)  
"Yet," said he, "poor piper as I am,  
In Tartary I freed the Cham,  
Last June, from his huge swarms of gnats ;  
I eased in Asia the Nizam  
Of a monstrous brood of vampire-bats :  
And as for what your brain bewilders,  
If I can rid your town of rats  
Will you give me a thousand guilders ? "  
"One ? fifty thousand !" — was the exclamation  
Of the astonished Mayor and Corporation.

## VII

Into the street the Piper stept,  
Smiling first a little smile,  
And if he knew what magic slept  
In his quiet pipe the while ;  
Then, like a musical adept,  
To blow the pipe his lips he wrinkled,  
And green and blue his sharp eyes twinkled,  
Like a candle-flame where salt is sprinkled ;  
And ere three shrill notes the pipe uttered,  
You heard as if an army muttered ;  
And the muttering grew to a grumbling ;  
And the grumbling grew to a mighty rumbling ;  
And out of the houses the rats came tumbling,  
Great rats, small rats, lean rats, brawny rats,  
Brown rats, black rats, grey rats, tawny rats,



Grave old plodders, gay young friskers,

Fathers, mothers, uncles, cousins,  
Cocking tails and pricking whiskers,

Families by tens and dozens,  
Brothers, sisters, husbands, wives —  
Followed the Piper for their lives.  
From street to street he piped advancing,  
And step for step they followed dancing,  
Until they came to the river Weser  
Wherein all plunged and perished!

—Save one who, shout as Julius Caesar,  
Swam across and lived to carry  
(As he, the manuscript he cherished)  
To Rat-land home his commentary:  
Which was, 'At the first shrill notes of the pipe,  
I heard a sound as of scraping tripe,  
And putting apples, wondrous ripe,  
Into a cider-press's gripe:

And a moving away of pickle-tub boards,  
And a leaving ajar of conserve-cupboards,  
And a drawing the corks of train-oil flasks,  
And a breaking the hoops of butter-casks;  
And it seemed as if a voice  
(Sweeter far than by harp or by psaltery  
Is breathed) called out, "Oh rats, rejoice!  
The world is grown to one vast drysaltery!  
So, munch on, crunch on, take your nuncheon,  
Breakfast, supper, dinner, luncheon!"

And just as a bulky sugar-puncheon,  
All ready staved, like a great sun shone  
Glorious, scarce an inch before me,  
Just as methought it said, 'Come, bore me!'  
—I found the Weser rolling o'er me."

## VIII

You should have heard the Hamelin people  
Ringing the bells till they rocked the steeple.  
"Go," cried the Mayor, "and get long poles!  
Poke out the nests and block up the holes!  
Consult with carpenters and builders,  
And leave in our town not even a trace  
Of the rats!"—When suddenly, up the face  
Of the piper perked in the market-place,  
With a, "First, if you please, my thousand guilders!"

## IX

A thousand guilders! The Mayor looked blue;  
So did the Corporation too.  
For council dinners made rare havoc  
With Claret, Moselle, *Vin-de-Grave*, Hock;  
And half the money would replenish  
Their cellar's biggest butt with Rhenish.  
To pay this sum to a wandering fellow  
With a gipsy coat of red and yellow!  
"Beside," quoth the Mayor with a knowing wink,  
"Our business was done at the river's brink;  
We saw with our eyes the vermin sink,  
And what's dead can't come to life, I think.  
So, friend, we're not the folks to shrink  
From the duty of giving you something for drink,  
And a matter of money to put in your poke;  
But, as for the guilders, what we spoke  
Of them, as you very well know, was in joke.  
Beside, our losses have made us thrifty.  
A thousand guilders! Come, take fifty!"



## X

The Piper's face fell, and he cried,  
"No trifling! I can't wait, beside!  
I've promised to visit by dinner time  
Bagdat, and accept the prime  
Of the Head-Cook's pottage, all he's rich in,  
For having left, in the Caliph's kitchen,  
Of a nest of scorpions no survivor —  
With him I proved no bargain driver;  
With you, don't think I'll bate a stiver!  
And folks who put me in a passion  
May find me pipe to another fashion."

## XI

"How?" cried the Mayor, "d'ye think I'll brook  
Being worse treated than a Cook?  
Insulted by a lazy ribald  
With idle pipe and vesture piebald?  
You threaten us, fellow! Do your worst!  
Blow your pipe there till you burst!"

## XII

Once more he stept into the street;  
And to his lips again  
Laid his long pipe of smooth straight cane;  
And ere he blew three notes (such sweet  
Soft notes as yet musician's cunning  
Never gave the enraptured air)  
There was a rustling that seemed like a bustling  
Of merry crowds justling at pitching and hustling,  
Small feet were pattering, wooden shoes clattering,

Little hands clapping and little tongues chattering,  
And, like fowls in farm-yard when barley is scattering,  
Out came children running.  
All the little boys and girls,  
With rosy cheeks and flaxen curls,  
And sparkling eyes and teeth like pearls,  
Tripping and skipping, ran merrily after  
The wonderful music with shouting and laughter.

## XIII

The Mayor was dumb, and the Council stood  
As if they were changed into blocks of wood,  
Unable to move a step, or cry  
To the children merrily skipping by —  
And could only follow with the eye  
That joyous crowd at the Piper's back.  
But now the Mayor was on the rack,  
And the wretched Council's bosom beat,  
As the Piper turned from the High Street  
To where the Weser rolled its waters  
Right in the way of their sons and daughters !  
However he turned from South to West,  
And to Koppelberg Hill his steps addressed,  
And after him the children pressed ;  
Great was the joy in every breast.  
"He never can cross that mighty top !  
He's forced to let the piping drop,  
And we shall see our children stop !"  
When, lo, as they reached the mountain's side,  
A wondrous portal opened wide,  
As if a cavern was suddenly hollowed ;  
And the Piper advanced and the children followed,

And when all were in to the very last,  
The door in the mountain-side shut fast.  
Did I say, all? No! One was lame,  
And could not dance the whole of the way;  
And in after years, if you would blame  
His sadness, he was used to say, —  
“It’s dull in our town since my playmates left!  
I can’t forget that I’m bereft  
Of all the pleasant sights they see,  
Which the Piper also promised me:  
For he led us, he said, to a joyous land,  
Joining the town and just at hand,  
Where waters gushed and fruit-trees grew,  
And flowers put forth a fairer hue,  
And everything was strange and new;  
The sparrows were brighter than peacocks here,  
And their dogs outran our fallow deer,  
And honey-bees had lost their stings,  
And horses were born with eagles’ wings:  
And just as I became assured,  
My lame foot would be speedily cured,  
The music stopped, and I stood still,  
And found myself outside the Hill,  
Left alone against my will,  
To go now limping as before,  
And never hear of that country more!”

## XIV

Alas, alas for Hamelin!

There came into many a burgher’s pate  
A text which says that Heaven’s gate  
Opes to the rich at as easy rate



As the neele's eye takes a camel in !  
The Mayor sent East, West, North and South,  
To offer the Piper, by word of mouth,

Wherever it was men's lot to find him,  
Silver and gold to his heart's content,  
If he'd only return the way he went,

And bring the children behind him.  
But when they saw 'twas a lost endeavour,  
And Piper and dancers were gone for ever,  
They made a decree that lawyers never

Should think their records dated duly  
If, after the day of the month and year,  
These words did not as well appear,

"And so long after what happened here

On the Twenty-second of July,  
Thirteen hundred and seventy-six : "

And the better in memory to fix  
The place of the children's last retreat,  
They called it, the Pied Piper's Street—  
Where any one playing on pipe or tabor  
Was sure for the future to lose his labour.  
Nor suffered they hostelry or tavern

To shock with mirth a street so solemn ;  
But opposite the place of the cavern

They wrote the story on a column,  
And on the great Church-window painted  
The same, to make the world acquainted  
How their children were stolen away ;  
And there it stands to this very day.

And I must not omit to say  
That in Transylvania there's tribe  
Of alien people that ascribe



The outlandish ways and dress  
On which their neighbours lay such stress,  
To their fathers and mothers having risen  
Out of some subterraneous prison  
Into which they were trepanned  
Long time ago in a mighty band  
Out of Hamelin town in Brunswick land,  
But how or why, they don't understand.

So, Willy, let me and you be wipers  
Of scores out with all men—especially pipers :  
And, whether they pipe us free from rats or from mice,  
If we've promised them aught, let us keep our  
promise.

*Robert Browning*





## PART IX

### THE TWENTIETH CENTURY POETRY



## FOREFATHERS

Here they went with smock and crook,  
Toiled in the sun, lolled in the shade,  
Here they mudded out the brook,  
And here their hatchet cleared the glade :  
Harvest-supper woke their wit,  
Huntman's moon their wooings lit.

From this church they led their brides,  
From this church themselves were led  
Shoulder-high ; on these waysides  
Sat to take their beer and bread.  
Names are gone — what men they were  
These their cottages declare.

Names vanished, save the few  
In the old brown Bible scrawled ;  
These were men of pith and thew,  
Whom the city never called ;  
Scarce could read or hold a quill,  
Built the barn, the forge, the mill.

On the green they watched their sons  
Playing till too dark to see,  
As their fathers watched them once,  
As my father once watched me ;  
While the bat and beetle flew  
On the warm air webbed with dew.

Unrecorded, unrenowned,  
Men from whom my ways begin,

Here I know you by your ground,

But I knew you not within —  
All is mist, and there survives  
Not a moment of your lives.

Like the bee that now is blown

Honey-heavy on my hand,  
From the toppling tansy-throne  
In the green tempestuous land, —  
I'm in clover now, nor know  
Who made honey long ago.

*Edmund Blunden*



## A BIRD'S ANGER

A summer's morning that has but one voice ;  
Five hundred stooks, like golden lovers, lean  
Their heads together, in their quiet way,  
And but one bird sings, of a number seen.

It is the lark, that louder, louder sings,  
As though but this one thought possessed his mind :  
"You silent robin, blackbird, thrush, and finch,  
I'll sing enough for all you lazy kind!"  
And when I hear him at this daring task,  
"Peace, little bird, "I say," and take some rest ;  
Stop that wild, screaming fire of angry song,  
Before it makes a coffin of your next."

*W. H. Davies*

## THE MOON

Thy beauty haunts me heart and soul,  
Oh thou fair Moon, close and bright;  
Thy beauty makes me like the child  
That cries aloud to own thy light:  
The little child that lifts each arm  
To press thee to her bosom warm.

Though there are birds that sing this night  
With thy white beams across their throats,  
Let my deep silence speak for me  
More than for them their sweetest notes:  
Who worships thee till music fails,  
Is greater than thy nightingales.

*W. H. Davies*

## TO A SNOWFLAKE

What heart could have thought you?—  
Past our devisal  
(O filigree petal!)  
Fashioned so purely,  
Fragilely, surely,  
From what Paradisal  
Imagineless metal,  
Too costly for cost?  
Who hammered you, wrought you,  
From argentine vapour?—

“God was my shaper,  
Passing surmisal,  
He hammered, He wrought me.  
From curled silver vapour,  
To lust of His mind:—  
Thou couldst not have thought me!  
So purely, so palely,  
Tinily, surely,  
Mightily, frailly,  
Insculped and embossed,  
With His hammer of wind,  
And His graver of frost.”

*Francis Thompson*

## TIME, YOU OLD GIPSY MAN

Time, you old gipsy man,  
Will you not stay,  
Put up your caravan  
Just for one day,

All things I'll give you  
Will you be my guest,  
Bells for your jennet  
Of silver the best,  
Goldsmiths shall beat you  
A great golden ring,  
Peacocks shall bow to you,  
Little boys sing,  
Oh, and sweet girls will  
Festoon you with may,  
Time you old gipsy,  
Why hasten away?

Last week in Babylon,  
Last night in Rome,  
Morning, in the crush  
Under Paul's dome;  
Under Paul's dial  
You tighten your rein—  
Only a moment,  
And off once again;  
Off to some city  
Now blind in the womb,  
Off to another  
Ere that's in the tomb.

Time, you old gipsy man,

Will you not stay,  
Put up your caravan  
Just for one day ?

*Ralph Hodgson*



## From: "REYNARD THE FOX"

The pure clean air came sweet to his lungs,  
 Till he thought foul scorn of those crying tongues.  
 In a three mile more he would reach the haven  
 In the Wan Dyke croaked on by the raven.  
 In a three mile more he would make his berth  
 On the hard cool floor of a Wan Dyke earth,  
 Too deep for spade, too curved for terrier,  
 With the pride of the race to make rest the merrier.  
 In a three mile more he would reach his dream,  
 So his game heart gulped and he put on steam.

.....

Like a rocket shot to a ship ashore  
 The lean red bolt of his body tore,  
 Like a ripple of wind running swift on grass;  
 Like a shadow on wheat when a cloud blows past,  
 Like a turn at the buoy in a cutter sailing  
 When the bright green gleam lips white at the railing,  
 Like the April snake whipping back to sheath,  
 Like the gannets' hurtle on fish beneath,  
 Like a kestrel chasing, like a sickle reaping,  
 Like all things swooping, like all things sweeping,  
 Like a hound for stay, like a stag for swift,  
 With his shadow beside like spinning drift.

.....

Past the gibbet-stock all stuck with nails,  
 Where they hanged in chains what had hung in jails,  
 Past Ashmundshowe where Ashmund sleeps,  
 And none but the tumbling peewit weeps,  
 Past Curlew Calling, the gaunt grey corner  
 Where the curlew comes as a summer mourner,  
 Past Blowbury Beacon, shaking his fleece,

Where all winds hurry and none brings peace ;  
Then down on the mile-long green decline,  
Where the turf's like spring and the air's like wine,  
Where the sweeping spurs of the downland spill  
Into Wan Brook Valley and Wan Dyke Hill.

.....

On he went with a galloping rally  
Past Maesbury Clump for Wan Brook Valley.  
The blood in his veins went romping high,  
"Get on, on, on, to the earth or die."  
The air of the downs went purely past  
Till he felt the glory of going fast,  
Till the terror of death, though there indeed.  
Was lulled for a while by his pride of speed.  
He was romping away from hounds and hunt,  
He had Wan Dyke Hill and his earth in front,  
In a one mile more when his point was made  
He would rest in safety from dog or spade ;  
Nose between paws he would hear the shout  
Of the "Gone to earth!" to the hounds without,  
The whine of the hounds, and their cat-feet gadding,  
Scratching the earth, and their breath padpadding;  
He would hear the horn call hounds away,  
And rest in peace till another day.

.....

In one mile more he would lie at rest,  
So for one mile more he would go his best.  
He reached the dip at the long droop's end,  
And he took what speed he had still to spend.

So down past Maesbury beech-clump grey  
That would not be green till the end of May,  
Past Arthur's Table, the White Chalk boulder,

Where pasque flowers purple the down's gray shoulder,  
Past Quichelm's Keeping, past Harry's Thorn,  
To Thirty Acre all thin with corn.

.....

As he raced the corn towards Wan Dyke Brook  
The pack had view of the way he took;  
Robin hallooed from the downland's crest,  
He capped them on till they did their best.  
The quarter-mile to the Wan Brook's brink  
Was raced as quick as a man can think.

.....

And here, as he ran to the huntsman's yelling,  
The fox first felt that the pace was telling;  
His body and lungs seemed all grown old,  
His legs less certain, his heart less bold,  
The hound-noise nearer, the hill-slope steeper,  
The thud in the blood of his body deeper.  
His pride in his speed, his joy in the race,  
Were withered away, for what use was pace?  
He had run his best, and the hounds ran better,  
Then the going worsened, the earth was wetter.  
Then his brush drooped down till it sometimes dragged,  
And his fur felt sick and his chest was tagged  
With taggles of mud, and his pads seemed lead,  
It was well for him he'd an earth ahead.

Down he went to the brook and over,  
Out of the corn and into the clover,  
Over the slope that the Wan Brook drains,  
Past Battle Tump where they earthed the Danes,  
Then up to the hill that the Wan Dyke rings  
Where the Sarsen Stones stand grand like kings.

.....



Seven Sarsens of granite grim,  
As he ran them by they looked at him;  
As he leaped the lip of their earthen paling  
The hounds were gaining and he was failing.

.....

He passed the Sarsens, he left the spur,  
He pressed uphill to the blasted fir,  
He slipped as he leaped the hedge; he slithered.  
"He's mine", thought Robin. "He's done; he's dithered."

.....

At the second attempt he cleared the fence,  
He turned half-right where the gorse was dense,  
He was leading the hounds by a furlong clear.  
He was past his best, but his earth was near.  
He ran up gorse to the spring of the ramp,  
The steep green wall of the dead men's camp,  
He sidled up it and scampered down  
To the deep green ditch of the Dead Men's Town.

.....

Within, as he reached that soft green turf,  
The wind, blowing lonely, moaned like surf,  
Desolate ramparts rose up steep  
On either side, for the ghosts to keep.  
He raced the trench, past the rabbit warren,  
Close-grown with moss which the wind made barren;  
He passed the spring where the rushes spread,  
And there in the stones was his earth ahead.  
One last short burst upon failing feet—  
There life lay waiting, so sweet, so sweet,  
Rest in a darkness, balm for aches.

.....

The earth was stopped. It was barred with stakes.

*John Masefield*

## MORNING EXPRESS

Along the wind-swept platform, pinched and white,  
The travellers stand in pools of wintry light,  
Offering themselves to morn's long, slanting arrows.  
The train's due ; porters trundle laden barrows.  
The train steems in, volleying resplendent clouds  
Of sun-blown vapour. Hither and about,  
Scared People hurry, storming the doors in crowds.  
The officials seem to waken with a shout,  
Resolved to hoist and plunder ; some to the vans  
Leap ; others rumble the milk in gleaming cans.

Boys, indolent-eyed, from baskets leaning back,  
Question each face ; a man with a hammer steals  
Stopping from coach to coach ; with clang and clack,  
Touches and tests, and listens to the wheels.  
Guard sounds a warning whistle, points to the clock  
With brandished flag, and on his folded flock  
Claps the last door : the monster grunts :  
"Enough !"

Tightening his load of links with pant and puff.  
Under the arch, then forth into blue day,  
Glide the processional windows on their way,  
And glimpse the stately folk who sit at ease  
To view the world like kings taking the seas  
In prosperous weather : drifting banners tell  
Their progress to the counties ; with them goes  
The clamour of their journeying ; while those  
Who sped them stand to wave a last farewell.

*Siegfried Sassoon*



## LONDON SNOW

When men were all asleep the snow came flying,  
In large white flakes fallen on the city brown,  
Stealthily and perpetually setting and loosely lying,

Hushing the latest traffic of the drowsy town;  
Deadening, muffling, stifling its murmurs failing;  
Lazily and incessantly floating down and down:

Silently sifting and veiling road, roof and railing;  
Hiding difference, making unevenness even,  
Into angles and crevices softly drifting and sailing.

All night it fell, and when full inches seven  
It lay in the depth of its uncompacted lightness,  
The clouds blew off from a high and frosty heaven;

And all woke earlier for the unaccustomed brightness  
Of the winter dawning, the strange unheavenly glare:  
The eye marvelled—marvelled at the dazzling whiteness;

The ear hearkened to the stillness of the solemn air;  
No sound of wheel rumbling nor of foot falling,  
And the busy morning cries came thin and spare.

Then boys I heard, as they went to school, calling,  
They gathered up the crystal manna to freeze  
Their tongues with tasting, their hands with snowballing;  
Or rioted in a drift, plunging up to the knees;  
Or peering up from under the white-mossed wonder,  
'O look at the trees!' they cried, 'O look at the trees!'

With lessened load a few carts creak and blunder,  
Following along the white deserted way,  
A country company long dispersed asunder:

When now already the sun, in pale display  
Standing by Paul's high dome, spread forth below  
His sparkling beams, and awoke the stir of the day.

For now doors open, and war is waged with the snow,  
And trains of sombre men, past tale of number,  
Tread long brown paths, as toward their toil they go:  
But even for them awhile no cares encumber  
Their minds diverted; the daily word is unspoken,  
The daily thoughts of labour and sorrow slumber  
At the sight of the beauty that greets them, for the  
charm they have broken.

*Robert Bridges*



## LATE SNOW

The heavy train through the dim country went  
rolling, rolling,  
Interminably passing misty snow-covered plough—  
land ridges  
That merged in the snowy sky; came turning meadows,  
fences,  
Came gullies and passed, and ice-coloured streams  
Under frozen bridges.

Across the travelling landscape evenly drooped and lifted  
The telegraph wires, thick ropes of snow in the  
windless air;  
They drooped and paused and lifted again to unseen  
summits,  
Drawing the eyes and soothing them, often, to a  
drowsy stare.

Singly in the snow the ghosts of trees were softly  
pencilled,  
Fainter and fainter, in distance fading, into nothing-  
ness gliding,  
But sometimes a crowd of the intricate silver trees  
of fairyland  
Passed, close and intensely clear, the phantom world  
hiding.

O untroubled these moving mantled miles of shadow-  
less shadows,  
And lovely the film of falling flakes; so wayward  
and slack;

But I thought of many a mother-bird screening her  
nestlings,  
Sitting silent with wide bright eyes, snow on her  
back.

*J. C. Squire*

## THE QUAILS \*

(In the south of Italy the peasants put out the eyes of a captured quail so that its cries may attract the flocks of spring migrants into their nets.)

All through the night  
I have heard the stuttering call of a blind quail,  
A caged decoy, under a cairn of stones,  
Crying for light as the quails cry for love.

Other wanderers,  
Northward from Africa winging on numb pinions, dazed  
With beating winds and the sobbing of the sea,  
Hear, in a breath of sweet land-herbage, the call  
Of the blind one, their sister.....  
Hearing, their fluttered hearts  
Take courage, and they wheel in their dark flight,  
Knowing that their toil is over, dreaming to see  
The white stubbles of Abruzzi smitten with dawn,  
And spilt grain lying in the furrows, the squandered gold  
That is the delight of quails in their spring mating.

.....

Downward they drift, one by one, like dark petals,  
Slowly, listlessly falling  
Into the mouth of horror :  
The nets.....

"Why should I be ashamed? Why should I rail  
Against the cruelty of men? Why should I pity,  
Seeing that there is no cruelty which men can imagine  
To match the subtle dooms that are wrought against them  
By blind spores of pestilence : seeing that each

\* Slightly abridged.



of us,  
Lured by dim hopes, flutters in the toils of death  
On a cold star that is spinning blindly through  
space  
Into the nets of time ? ”

So cried I, bitterly thrusting pity aside,  
Closing my lids to sleep. But sleep came not,  
And pity, with sad eyes,  
Crept to my side, and told me  
That the life of all creatures is brave and pityful  
Whether they be men, with dark thoughts to vex  
them,  
Or birds, wheeling in the swift joys of flight,  
Or brittle ephemerids, spinning to death in the haze  
Of gold that quivers on dim evening waters ;  
Nor would she be denied.  
The harshness died  
Within me, and my heart  
Was caught and fluttered like the palpitant heart  
Of a brown quail, flying  
To the call of her blind sister  
And death, in the spring night.

*Francis Brett Young*

PART X

THE POETRY OF THE MODERN  
CONSCIOUSNESS



# THE RUBAIYAT OF OMAR KHAYYAM

## I

Here with a Loaf of Bread beneath the Bough,  
A Flask of Wine, A Book of Verse — and Thou  
Beside me singing in the Wilderness —  
And, Wilderness is Paradise enow.

## II

Think, in this batter'd Caravanserai  
Whose Portals are alternate Night and Day,  
How Sultan after Sultan with his Pomp  
Abode his Hour or two and went his way.

## III

Ah Love! could thou and I with Fate conspire  
To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,  
Would not we shatter it to bits—and then  
Re-mould it nearer to the Heart's desire!

## IV

The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,  
Moves on; nor all thy piety nor Wit,  
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,  
Nor all thy Tears wash out a Word of it.

*Edward Fitzgerald*  
(1809—1883)



## SPRING AND FALL: to a young child

MARGARET, are you grieving  
Over Goldengrove unleaving?  
Leaves, like the things of man, you  
With your fresh thoughts care for, can you?  
Ah! as the heart grows older  
It will come to such sights colder  
By and by, nor spare a sigh  
Though worlds of wanwood leafmeal lie;  
And yet you will weep and know why.  
Now no matter, child, the name:  
Sorrow's springs are the same.  
Nor mouth had, no nor mind, expressed  
What heart heard of, ghost guessed:  
It is the blight man was born for,  
It is Margaret you mourn for.

*Gerard Manley Hopkins*  
(1844-89)

## FROM LOOK, STRANGER!

Our hunting fathers told the story  
Of the sadness of the creatures,  
Pitied the limits and the lack  
Set in their finished features ;  
Saw in the lion's intolerant look,  
Behind the quarry's dying glare,  
Love raging for the personal glory,  
That reason's gift would add,  
The liberal appetite and power,  
The rightness of a god.

Who nurtured in that fine tradition  
Predicted the result,  
Guessed love by nature suited to  
The intricate ways of guilt ?  
That human ligaments could so  
His southern gestures modify,  
And make it his ambition  
To think no thought but ours,  
To hunger, work illegally,  
And be anonymous ?

*Wystan Hugh Auden*  
( 1907— )



## JOURNEY OF THE MAGI \*

"A cold coming we had of it,  
Just the worst time of the year  
For a journey, and such a long journey:  
The ways deep and the weather sharp,  
The very dead of winter."  
And the camels galled, sore-footed, refractory,  
Lying down in the melting snow.  
There were times we regretted  
The summer palaces on slopes, the terraces,  
And the silken girls bringing sherbet.  
And then the camel men cursing and grumbling  
And running away,  
And the night-fires going out, and lack of shelters,  
And the cities hostile and the towns unfriendly  
And the villages dirty and changing high prices:  
A hard time time we had of it.

At the end we preferred to travel all night,  
Sleeping in snatches,  
With the voices singing in our ears, saying  
That this was all folly.  
Then at dawn we came down to a temperate valley,  
Wet, below the snow line, smelling of vegetation;  
With a running stream and a water-mill beating  
the darkness,  
And three trees on the low sky,  
And an old white horse galloped away in the meadow.  
Then we came to a tavern with vine-leaves over the lintel,  
Six hands at an open door dicing for pieces of silver,  
And feet kicking the empty wine-skins.

\* Slightly abridged.





## THE MAGNETIC MOUNTAIN

Somewhere beyond railheads  
Of reason, south or north,  
Lies a magnetic mountain  
Riveting sky to earth.

No line is laid so far.  
Ties rusting in a stack  
And sleepers—dead men's bones—  
Mark a defeated track.

Kestrel who yearly changes  
His tenement of space  
At the last hovering  
May signify that place.

Iron in the soul,  
Spirit steeled in fire,  
Needle trembling on truth—  
These draw me there.

The planets hold their course,  
Blindly the bee comes home,  
And I shall need no sextant  
To prove I'm getting warm.

Near that miraculous mountain  
Compass and clock must fail,  
For space stands on its head there  
And time chases its tail.

There's iron for the asking  
Will keep all winds at bay,

Girders to take the leaden  
Strain of a sagging sky.

O there's a mine of metal,  
Enough to make me rich  
And build right over choas  
A cantilever bridge.

*C. Day Lewis*  
(1904—)

# KEY :

Magnetic Mountain : truth. riveting : fixing firmly.  
stack : pile grain or grass. Kestrel : a small hawk : the  
poet addresses his joy as " hestrel joy " which is a  
" hoverer in wind ". Sextant : instrument used in  
surveying and navigation and measures angular distances.  
" O there's a mine of metal...../A cantilever bridge " :  
the poet expresses his idea of fulfilment, if he finds  
the truth, (that is the magnetic mountain) in terms of  
the modern industrial age.



PART XI PART XI PART XI PAI





## BRAHMA

If the red slayer think he slays,  
Or if the slain think he is slain,  
They know not well the subtle ways  
I keep, and pass, and turn again.

Far or forgot to me is near;  
Shadow and sunlight are the same;  
The vanish'd gods to me appear;  
And one to me are shame and fame.

They reckon ill who leave me out;  
When me they fly, I am the wings;  
I am the doubter and the doubt,  
And I the hymn the Brahmin sings.

The strong gods pine for my abode,  
And pine in vain the sacred Seven;  
But thou, meek lover of the good!  
Find me, and turn thy back on heaven.

*Ralp Waldo Emerson*  
(1803—1882)

## THE SOUND OF THE SEA

The Sea awoke at midnight from its sleep,  
And round the pebbly beaches far and wide  
I heard the first wave of the rising tide  
Rush onward with uninterrupted sweep;  
A voice out of the silence of the deep.  
A sound mysteriously multiplied  
As of a cataract from the mountain's side,  
Or roar of winds upon a wooded steep.  
So comes to us at times, from the unknown,  
And inaccessible solitudes of being,  
The rushing of the sea-tides of the soul;  
And inspirations, that we deem our own,  
Are some divine foreshadowing and foreseeing  
Of things beyond our reason or control.

*Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*  
(1807—1882)



## THE IMPRISONED SOUL

At the last, tenderly,  
From the walls of the powerful, fortress'd house,  
From the clasp of the knitted locks — from the keep  
of the well-closed doors,  
Let me be wafted.

Let me glide noiselessly forth;  
With the key of softness unlock the locks — with a whisper  
Set ope the doors, O soul!  
Tenderly! be not impatient!  
(Strong is your hold, O mortal flesh!  
Strong is your hold, O love!)

*Walt Whitman*  
(1819—1892)



## THE DANCING GIRL

Upagupta, the disciple Buddha, lay asleep on the dust  
by the city wall of Mathura.

Lamps were all out, doors were all shut, and stars were  
all hidden by the murky sky of August.

Whose feet were those tinkling with anklets, touching  
his breast of a sudden?

He woke up startled, and the light from woman's lamp  
struck his forgiving eyes.

It was the dancing-girl, starred with jewels, clouded  
with a pale-blue mantle, drunk with the wine  
of youth.

She lowered her lamp and saw the young face, austere  
beautiful.

'Forgive me, young ascetic,' said the woman; 'Graciously  
come to my house. The dusty earth is not  
a fit bed for you.'

Suddenly the black night showed its teeth in a flash  
of lightning.

.....

The branches of the wayside trees were aching with  
blossom.

Gay notes of the flute came floating in the warm  
spring air from afar.

The citizens had gone to the woods, to the festival  
of flowers.

From the mid-day sky gazed the full moon on the  
shadows of the silent town.

The young ascetic was walking in the lonely street,  
while overhead the love-sick Koels urged from  
the mango branches their sleepless plaint.

Upagupta passed through the city gates and stood at  
the base of the rampart.

What woman lay in the shadow of the wall at his  
feet, struck with the black pestilence, her body  
spotted with the sores, hurriedly driven away  
from the town?

The ascetic sat by her side, taking her head on his  
knees, and moistened her lips with water, and  
smeared her body with balm.

'Who are you, merciful one?' asked the woman. 'The  
time, at last, has come to visit you, and I am  
here', replied the young ascetic.

*Rabindranath Tagore*  
( 1861-1941 )



## IN THE BAZAARS OF HYDERABAD

1. What do you sell, O ye merchants?  
Richly your wares are displayed.  
Turbans of crimson and silver,  
Tunics of purple brocade,  
Mirrors with panels of amber,  
Daggers with handles of jade.
2. What do you weigh, O ye vendors?  
Saffron and lintel and rice.  
What do you grind, ye maidens?  
Sandalwood, henna, and spice.  
What do you call, O ye pedlars?  
Chessmen and ivory dice.
3. What do you make, O ye goldsmiths?  
Wristlet and anklet and ring,  
Bells for the feet of blue pigeons,  
Frail as a dragon-fly's wing,  
Girdles of gold for the dancers,  
Scabbards of gold for the king.
4. What do you cry, O ye fruitmen?  
Citron, pomegranate, and plum?  
What do you play, O musicians?  
Cithtar, Saranghi, drum.  
What you chant, O musicians?  
Spells for the aeons to come.
5. What do you weave, O ye flower girls  
With tassels of azure and red?

Crowns for the brow of a bridegroom,  
Chaplets to garland his bed,  
Sheets of white blossom new-garnered  
To perfume the sleep of the dead.

*Sarojini Naidu.*





# CRITICISM



PART I

ELIZABETHAN LYRICS

( CRITICISM )





## ELIZABETHAN LYRICS

In the comparative calm of Elizabethan sentiment, Castiglioni's *Courtier* (1528) pointed to a model behaviour for a fashionable lover: The condition that the courtier, or lover, should be skilful at music and poetry was fulfilled at the court of Henry VIII. Of course, one might say that all this led to the writing of a great deal of indifferent poetry. But, it must be admitted that it at least ensured the value of poetry and provided an audience that could appreciate the poetry of others.

In fact, most of the lyrical poetry of the period is love poetry whetted by approximate equality between sexes, the effect of the Renaissance being to raise the status of women who had been put on a pedestal by the courts of love in the middle ages. So it happens that Shakespeare's Portia, Viola, Rosalind and others are superior to the men. What would seem to have assisted the general trend was the presence on the English throne of a female sovereign who was the focus of patriotism, adoration and flattery.

The native influence on the Elizabethan lyric cannot be overlooked in that this interesting form, after all, evolved from the medieval lyric, some of the stanza-forms employed being traceable back to the time of Chaucer and some being found in the court songs of Henry VIII's reign. However, the foreign influence was decisive. Italian, Spanish and French poetry all contributed. The sonnet form and many of the conventions of Elizabethan love poetry came from Italy. The Petrarch sonnet-themes, the transitoriness of beauty, the pains of absence, the immortality conferred by poetry, the cruelty and chastity of the lady—were introduced by many English poets. The theme of unresponded love which involved some dramatic tension and promised some type of tragedy of passion became a favourite with English sonneteers. The French poets of the sixteenth century, Ronsard, Du Bellay, and Desportes were much imitated in English. The pastoral tone of much lyric verse

derived from French and Italian sources. Ovid's influence was considerable on lyrics. Horace and Catullus were imitated by Campion, Jonson, and others. The part played by Sir Thomas Wyatt is very great because of his fusion of foreign influence with native forms, of Italian conventions of love with individual feeling. Surrey looked to Wyatt as his master. Surrey's verse is smooth and accomplished. That is perhaps the reason why he did not suffer much in the miscellanies in which the work of these poets was emended to comply with the editor's theories of correct versification. Wyatt's verse was thus dreadfully mangled. But, the passionate ruggedness, the depth and the cunning irregularities of Wyatt's verse are really his great poetic qualities.

The first miscellany was Totell's *Songs and Sonnettes* which included some poems of Wyatt and Surrey. It showed that other poets limped far behind Wyatt and Surrey, justifying Sidney's complaint that there was a dearth of good poets between the death of Surrey and the publication of *The Shepheard's Calender*.

*Astrophel and Stella*, *The Shepheard's Calender*, and *The Faerie Queene* constitute a high watermark in the development of the early Elizabethan poetry. Minor poets had to bear in mind these works and to show a sense of high standards in the matter of technique. Long flabby lines, excessive alliteration, inappropriate diction, wooden rhythms and other crude devices were, as far as possible, avoided.

### SONNET.

The quatrains in Daniel's drama, *Cleopatra*, often resolve themselves into Shakespearean sonnets. From this it will be easy to see how great was the sonneteering craze in Elizabethan times. The sonnet-sequence, *Astrophel and Stella*, occasioned by the Lady Rich-Sidney situation, would seem to have augmented the craze. Besides Sidney, there were Spenser, Greville, Constable and many others trying their hand at this *genre* in the hope that they would do for English poetry what Ronsard, Marot and Du Bellay had done for French. A large number of sonnet-sequences appeared after the publication of *Astrophel and Stella*. Here are some of these: Daniel's *Delia*, Constable's *Diana*, Lodge's *Phyllis*, Watson's *Tears of Fancie*, Giles Fletcher's *Licia*, Barnabe Barnes's *Parthenophil and*



*Parthenophe*, Percy's *Coela*, the anonymous *Zephera*. Drayton's *Ideas Mirror*, Spenser's *Amoretti*, Richard Barnfield's *Cynthia*, Barnes's *Divine Centurie of Spiritual Sonnets*, and Champion's *Coronet for His Mistresse Philosophie*. In Scotland also King James's sonnets, Sir William Alexander's *Aurora*, and William Drummond's work are notable in this respect. Shakespeare's *Sonnets* was one of the last collections to be published. Then came Greville's *Caelica* in 1635. Of course, Donne's sonnets are strictly outside the period. But, they are in a sense the culmination of Elizabethan religious sonnets. Barnes, Constable, Greville and Drummond had written sonnets on religious themes. Is not one of Shakespeare's sonnets religious, being an address to his soul? All of these sonnets are not good. There are some sonnets which have nothing to recommend them. The sonnets of Lynch, Smith, Tofte are just pitiful things. Lodge, Barnes, and Fletcher seem to give no evidence of originality. The early sonnets of Drayton are pedestrian. Daniel's sonnets are wanting in passion. Spenser extenuated many defects of his sonnets by maintaining a high level of melody and craftsmanship of his verse. It is, therefore, necessary to exercise discrimination in one's approach to Elizabethan sonnets in order to be able to appreciate what is good. There were many sonnets merely buttressed by the convention in which sonnets were written. Sir John Davies satirized them as "the bastard sonnets of these rhymesters base." Shakespeare seems to have been aware of the artificiality and insincerity of some of these sonnets when he attacked the convention in *Romeo and Juliet*, *As you Like It* and his own *Sonnets*. But, there were also sonnets which would appear to depend for part of their effect on the tradition in which they were written, on the consummate expression of the great commonplaces, on the subtle deviations from the conventional and — what is more important — on the amalgam of tradition and the individual talent. The themes of these sonnets may be conventional, throwing back to Petrarch and Ovid. All the same, they were good and had an extraordinary range in so far as the writers corrected the convention by the realities of their own experience. Sidney and Shakespeare, and some other poets in such occasional successes as are given in this selection, proved upon their pulses the subject of their sonnets.

As for the sincerity of Elizabethan sonnets, one need not over-



work the biographical method by referring to the Sidney-Lady Rich relationship, the Spenser-Elizabeth Boyle marriage, the Daniel-Mary Sidney affair, the Drayton-Anne Goodre situation, and the Shakespeare-Dark Lady story. Certainly one can say that these events would support the critic who held that these poets looked into their heart and wrote, thus saving them from the charges of plagiarism and conventionality. But the sincerity of poetry does not depend upon its biographical truth. A sonnet could be poetically sincere, even though the events described in it were altogether fictional. There is no doubt that imitation leads to mere pastiche. But, are not Sidney, Shakespeare and even Wyatt truly original even when they are most indebted to other authors? What is worth a serious consideration of the reader, is that many of these Elizabethans, writing in a fashionable convention and imitating each other as well as foreign poets, should produce sonnets so varied in tone and style. The fashionable convention would appear to have lent them a detachment necessary for a work of art so that their lyrics are less personal than those of the Romantics. On the whole, perhaps they are, for that reason, better.

## SIR THOMAS WYATT

During his travels, Sir Thomas Wyatt was inspired by the attractive ease and elegance of the continental lyrics and sonnets. Petrarch and Clement Marot at the French court would seem to have wielded the main influence on the English poet's mind. "Grafted on [the native stock of English poetry, Wyatt's] foreign graces came to flower." Like Chaucer, he made his poetry the child at once of England, France and Italy.

His lyrics point to the facility and power he attained over this medium. His use of refrain, which was a traditional feature of the English lyric and ballad, is to be noted. It is not right to dismiss Wyatt as a mere innovator on account of the uncouthness of a good deal of his verse. Of course, unevenness of the execution was his chief fault. But, that hardly justifies the want of attention of modern times towards his work. His reputation is ensured by his few deeply poignant and polished lyrics. There is a note of modernity in him. For this, and for his sincerity of utterance and directness, and his passion for rending the veils of make-believe from life, Wyatt can be compared with Donne. As a man, he was definitely gentler than Donne, though much smaller a poet than the "metaphysical" bard. However, Donne lacked a quality which Wyatt possessed abundantly. And, that was pity. Moreover, Donne had not that quiet and noble bitterness of Wyatt's finest song ;

"Vengeance shall fall on thy disdain  
That makest but fame on earnest pain ;  
Think not alone under the sun  
Unjust to cause thy lovers plain,  
Although my lute and I have done.

Perchance thee lie withered and old  
The winter nights that are so cold,  
Plaining in vain unto the moon ;  
Thy wishes then dare not be told ;  
Care then who list, for I have done.

Is not this simple dignity impossible even for Donne ? Some critics went so far as to hail Wyatt as "the father of English poetry." Certainly the singing quality of Wyatt's best verse is charming, and



this quality is absolutely necessary for pure lyric. The lyric chosen here embodies all these qualities.

### Explanations.

**Grame** : distress

**Wealth** : prosperity

**Woe** : misfortune, adversity.

**depart** : (poetic, archaic etc.) go away from, part with.

**smart** : sharp pain.

## THE EARL OF SURREY

Like Wyatt, Surrey naturalized French and Italian forms on English soil. He was well grounded in modern languages, Spanish, Italian and French. Besides his tutor who set him exercises in making Latin and English verses, Surrey's mother is said to have been his chief literary influence. Surrey received an enduring impress from Castiglioni's *Courtier* and Elyot's *Governour*, the great aristocratic documents designed for instruction and training of courtiers and statesmen.

The attitude of the gifted young men at the court of Henry VIII towards love was modelled on the types known to the devotees of the ancient and honourable code of chivalry. Three types of women were popular: the insipid idol of male worship who shows 'mercy' and 'pity' to her lovers in accordance with the regulation pattern of the *Courts of Love*; the fickle mistress of the type of Cressida, like Chaucer's and Shakespeare's heroines of that name, who is inconstant to one lover, and so violates the code of chivalry; and the unfaithful wife of the Guinevere type or the Iseult class. The first of these, made familiar through the verse of Petrarch appears to have attracted Surrey. The sonnet in this selection is a direct rendering. With Wyatt, Surrey shares the credit of establishing the sonnet firmly in English, but, what is more important, he gave to English verse the chance of acquitting itself wonderfully well in blank verse. The later marvels of Marlowe and Shakespeare should be assessed in the light of Surrey's first strivings. Moreover, Surrey gave to English what goes by the name of style. One of the characteristics of Surrey's verse was pride, the intolerable pride which ultimately ended his life in tragedy.

**Explanations.**

<b>Whereas:</b>	(Conj. taking into consideration the fact) here it means <i>where</i> .
<b>Parch :</b>	make hot and dry, (viz, where it is too hot).
<b>Dissolve:</b>	melt or decompose (viz, where it is too cold).
<b>temperate :</b>	moderate (viz where the climate is mild).
<b>in presence</b>	
<b>prest :</b>	crowded and pushed in the presence of people etc.
<b>lusty :</b>	healthy, strong.



<b>dale :</b>	valley
<b>foaming :</b>	full of foam.
<b>thrall :</b>	slave
<b>at large :</b>	free
<b>whereso :</b>	wheresoever
<b>Nought :</b>	nothing (poetic, archaic)

## SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella*, inspired by Penelope Devereux, is a sonnet sequence pointing to the perfection of the English sonnet. Penelope Devereux, otherwise known as Lady Rich, is "Stella", Sidney's star. He, Astrophel, is enamoured of the star. What is striking in Sidney's sonnet is the absence of the over-ornamentation, wealth of conceit and metaphor which it was the fashion of the time to toss down upon one's thoughts and moods. One is fascinated by Sidney's clear note of sincerity. This sonnet is well known. Its opening lines have been quoted by and have fascinated Wordsworth and Shelley. Personification which has been the favourite convention of poets in all times is freely used in this sonnet. After Sidney, England witnessed the remarkable outburst of sonnet-sequences, which was certainly one of the chief characteristics of 1590's. More than any other poet, Sidney became the model of Castiglioni's *Courtier*. He succeeds in convincing his reader that he is working off his strong feelings in this sonnet.

**Explanations.**

**Wan :** Pale, haggard.

**busy archer :** Cupid, god of love, represented as a beautiful blind boy with bow and arrows.

**sharp :** keen, painful.

**long-with-love-acquainted eyes :** eyes which have a long experience of love.

**languisht :** worn out, enfeebled, lack-lustre.

**want of wit :** want of wisdom or understanding or sense.

**beauties :** beautiful women

**scorn :** look down upon, treat with contempt.

**ungratefulness :** ingratitude.



## JOHN LYLY

Lyly is famous for his novel, *Euphues, the Anatomie of Wit*. In the life and talk and dress of the court of Elizabeth, its farfetched conceits, its sense of gallantry, its metaphors, its gorgeous descriptions of dress were reflected.

In the poetry of the Elizabethans, Lyly is also known for his atmosphere of escape. There is no denying that Shakespeare owed a good deal of his atmosphere of escape in *A Mid summer Night's Dream*, *As you like it*, and *Twelfth Night* to Lyly. Lyly's own plays are known for their grace and sparkling wit. The poem is from the play, *Campaspe* (1881). An excellent example of a beautifully sustained conceit, it describes the conflict in Alexander's breast for his captive, the Theban Campaspe and his consciousness of his royal duty. The poem will be considered along with other *Songs from plays* in Part IV. Lyly's poetry points to the period of transition when the conventional poetry of the court had declined and when, instead, popular poetry, shorn of all artificiality, had been in vogue. It is to be remembered that Marlowe, Shakespeare and other playwrights had to scatter songs through their plays for the sake of the populace.

See under *Songs from Plays*.

## CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE

Marlowe, with his *Tamburlane*, gave a lead in the Elizabethan drama. Many poets, for the last three hundred years after Marlowe's death, have attempted to imbibe from him the "Hola, Ye-pampered-Jades-of-Asia" manner. The poem in this selection shows how the poet who thundered at his contemporaries his mighty lines can put on a quiet mood proper to a pastoral lyric. The pastoral convention which inculcated in a whole generation a taste for literary jewellery was firmly established by Sidney in his *Arcadia*. With Arden, Broceliande, and Cockaigne, Aracdia became a symbol for the kingdom of the mind eternally sought after by all true romantics.

The poem recalls the sun-drenched 'merry month of May' so much cherished by the Tudors. The England of the May festival with its rites of the Maypole and morris-dance, is so dear to the people of country-side.

**Explanations.**

**To whose falls :** to the tune of whose falls.

**Melodious :** Sweet—sounding.

**Madrigals :** the madrigal was an unaccompanied song from three to six voices, to be sung by a small group of friends sitting round a table in home or in the tavern.

**Posics :** bouquets, bunch of flowers.

**Kirtle :** a sort of gown or outer petticoat.

**Myrtle :** an evergreen shrub with beautiful and fragrant leaves.

**Swains :** Country lovers.

**If these delights Thy mind may move :** If these pleasures interest you or commend themselves to you.



## WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Shakespeare was the writer of exquisite lyrics, many of which are to be found in his plays. He was also the greatest sonneteer. If there had been nothing else than sonnets to testify to Shakespeare's lyric genius, it would have been established that he possessed an ear attuned to perfect harmonies of songs. The sonnets were written in the tradition. But they were beautiful because of the individual talent of the illustrious Elizabethan. Nearly all the themes on which he writes had been treated by other poets, but Shakespeare continually corrects the convention by the realities of his experience. He may appear to echo Ovid, yet he proves on his pulses the conflict between time and beauty. Shakespeare's sonnets have an extraordinary range. Although nominally all love poems, they deal with friendship, with idealistic worship of beauty, with sacrifice of friendship to love, with sensuality and lust, and with ideas and feelings about life to which love is merely a background. Some sonnets are witty. Some are bawdy. Some are ironical. All display a psychological realism and a depth of self-analysis which reveal the born dramatist. They reveal him as "the mighty poet of the human heart."

Even Spenser could not equal the musical range of Shakespeare's sonnets. In view of the original imagery, complexity and subtlety of Shakespeare's sonnets, all other Elizabethan sonnet-sequences appear insubstantial. Of course, only Sidney's sonnets approach Shakespeare's in verisimilitude.

As for the Songs from Shakespeare's plays, they will be considered separately with the songs from the plays of other poets, in Part IV.

The sonnet in this selection points to the use of imagery. Perhaps it is an excellent example to show the power poetry has to assimilate and unify the diversity of material which the streamy nature of association sweeps into the poet's consciousness. It is quite true to say that nothing has merely its face value in any elaborate organization of figurative language. A poem is never the sum total of its individual parts any more than a face is the sum total of its individual features. It is the relationships of the various images which create the poem, the way they colour and influence each other,

the way in which a wide variety of different kinds of objects, of suggestions, of perceptions are subdued to one predominant idea, while at the same time they enrich it with a host of subsidiary ideas proper to each. The theme of this sonnet is simple: The poet says that if he is to lose his friend, he would rather the blow came at once, while he is already in disgrace with fortune.

Image after image is called up. There are suggestions of human malignity and the sport of fortune, of a late visitor "dropping in" when others have left, of escape, of an army overtaken in flight, of the English climate, of wrestling, of keeping a tit-bit to eat at the end—all jumbled together, abstract and concrete, as it were, jostling each other. There is also a great effect gained by mingling "poetic diction" with common colloquialisms. And yet, is not the whole an indivisible unity? Certainly, in very concentrated and closely interlocked imagery such as this, it is not possible for the reader to give a completely rational account of his responses.

Another important point in this sonnet is its peculiar type of evolution, its strain of passionate reasoning which knits the first line to the last. This gives it its peculiar e'lan. One might call it the intellectual feature of this sonnet. The argumentative evolution, with its double quatrain and sestet often makes a sonnet the poetical analogy of syllogism. It is worth one's while to mark this sonnet in point of its slow and meditative movement, a single thought expanded and articulated through the triple division, and the longer decasyllabic line. Shakespeare shares this quality alone with Donne who quickened his movement and intensified this strain of passionate ratiocination. Donne carried it over from the sonnet to other forms of his poetry. Cf. Donne's *Valediction: forbidding mourning*.

### Explanation

**To cross:** To thwart, to land one into misfortune.

**Drop in:** Go or come, casually as visitor.

**After-loss:** Loss that follows other losses.

**Come in the rearward of a conquered woe:** Come after the misfortune, under which I am smarting, is over.

**To linger out:** Make it more painful by putting it off.



**Purpose'd :** Thought before hand, premeditated.

**Onset:** Attack.

**And other strain of woe...will not seem so :** All other woes will be merged and lose their intensity if the blow of losing you comes to me all at once.

## BEN JONSON

Ben Jonson was a great figure of the Elizabethan age. With all this knowledge of Greek, his fundamentally Latin culture, and his principles of soundness, reflection and self-control, he could not acquire Shakespeare's range of vigour. His lyrics are in imitation of Greek. His beautiful elegies and poignant epitaphs are comparable to the lyrics of Herrick who was his great disciple. The qualities Ben Jonson rated highly and inherited from his Latin studies were restraint, discipline, balance, polish and finish. The love poem included in this selection is an excellent example of all of these qualities. It is very simple and hardly needs an explanation.

**Explanations.**

**Jove :** A poetical equivalent of Jupiter, originally the elemental God of the Romans, came to be identified with Zeus, the greatest of the Greek Gods, son of Saturn.

**Nectar :** drink of the Gods according to the Greek myth.

**Withered be :** decay.



## THOMAS CAMPION

Campion was one of the most graceful song-writers of all Elizabethans. His successful songs are scattered among his masques. Any one interested in collecting delightful examples of Elizabethan songwriting must ransack the plays. Among Campion's contemporaries, Dekker, Greene, and Lodge will be remembered for at least one or two perfect specimens. As Legouis put it, in these songs "the nimble versification is unfailingly marvellous. Every resource and variety of form is in use—the eight and six syllabled iambic line, the seven syllabled trochaic line, the anapaestic line, combinations of these metres, refrains which do not scan but which delight the ear, simple and double rhymes, the most various arrangements of echoing words. The law governing them cannot be specified, for almost each one has its distinct form, line or stanza. They are made for music, and their only rule is to fit the air with which, or for which they have been created."

Moreover, it must be noted that Campion was not only a poet but a musician. He had a special gift for half-serious songs of deliciously pretty tunes, distinguished by neatness of workmanship. The poem in this selection has all these characteristics.

**Explanations.**

**Engirt thee round :** Surround you like a girdle.

**White Iope :**

**Blithe :** Joyous, gay.

**Helen :** Helen of Troy, wife of Menelaus, carried off by Paris who married her. Thus she was the cause of the Trojan War.

**Banqueting delights :** delights accruing from feasts.

**Masks :** Masques, histrionic entertainmet, originally in dumb show and later including dialogue ; dramatic composition for this.

**Revels :** Merry-making.

**Tourney :** Tournament.

**Challanges of knights :** duels, jousts.

## ROBERT HERRICK

Herrick associated himself with 'the tribe of Ben', a literary circle which took Ben Jonson as its master. Herrick's lyrics seem to be fresh even today. With the relish of an epicure, he was a great poet of domestic life.

*To Blossoms* expresses what compensation beauties of nature afford. With all this sense of the beauty of nature—in other words, the love of life—there should, of course, go the realisation of the brevity of life. Herrick concludes in the most memorable lines of his next poem here.

“Gather ye rose-buds while ye may,  
Old Time is still a--flying :  
And this same flower that smiles to-day  
To-morrow will be dying.”

Life is short, though extremely beautiful. Time is out to devastate everything. Therefore ; “Not the fruit of experience, but experience itself, is an end. A counted number of pulses is given to us of a variegated, dramatic life. How may we see in them all that is to be seen in them by the finest senses...To burn always with this hard, gemlike flame, to maintain this ecstasy, is success in life.” Herrick said through expression what Pater agrued in these words.

**Explanations.**

- Pledges :** Promises, flowers are promises of the trees in that they promise fruit.  
**Coy :** Shy  
**Prime :** Springtime, youth.  
**Tarry :** Wait, get held up.



## EDMUND WALLER

Waller was born in the year when *King Lear* was acted. He died in the year when Dryden published the *Hind and the Panther*. It is indeed a considerable period and must promise a chequered career. Waller did have a chequered career. As Massingham pointed out, Waller was with Denham, one of the first refiners of English language and poetry. He supported the plea for simplicity of language and the smooth heroic couplet.

The poem in this selection points to something of the wit of the metaphysical poets. But, it is purified to a great extent. Of course, there is a world of difference between Donne and Waller. It is no use looking for the passion and the downrightness which make Donne's poetry ingratiating and which are absent from that of Waller. However, Waller was essentially different. The following titles of some of his poems might help one to form an idea of the direction Waller's muse was taking. *To my Lord Admiral, of his late sickness and recovery, To Zalinda, To Amoret, To a lady singing a song of his composing, To a lady from whom he received a silver pen*, etc. It would seem to be obvious that Waller was at his ease when exhibiting unrivalled posturing before ladies of quality.

**Explanations.**

**Resemble her :** Liken her.

**Shuns :** avoids.

**Spy'd :** Seen.

**from the light retired :** from the world cut off.

**Suffer :** allow.

**how small a part of time they share :** how short a lease of life they have.

## HENRY VAUGHAN

The English have had their mediaeval mystics and later, their Vaughan, Norris of Bemerton, William Law and Blake. There is a streak of mysticism in Lawrence. In her *Mysticism in Literature*. Professor Caroline Spurgeon uses the term in very broad sense. To a man from the East, all this does not appear a good kind of mysticism: Often it may seem mere muddleheadedness and imprecise emotion. In poetry, however, one does not concern oneself specifically with mysticism as such. What is important is whether the experience, called mystic, has been vividly felt and woven into a memorable pattern.

Vaughan who was preoccupied, like Wordsworth, with the innocence of childhood, may have a greater appeal in India for his note of mystic ecstasy and remoteness from this world. The lines evoked by the memory of dead friends are, indeed, beautiful, reminding one of the twilight ecstasy of Yeats:

“Glow and glitters in my lonely breast  
Like stars upon some gloomy grove.”.

In the poem Vaughan contrasts the happy condition of the “Friends Departed” with his unenviable state on this earth. He invokes God to “resume His Spirit”, and allow Him to be known and felt, and so put an end to the earthly miseries and establish a finer freedom on earth. Alternatively, he asks God to remove him to the heavenly hill where he will need no aids to discover the beauties that can make him one in understanding of the heavenly harmonies his departed friends enjoy. Of course, it is a prayer, not to be reserved for a mosque or temple, but to operate abroad among the fields and under the starry sky where poets pray if they are so inclined.

**Explanations.**

**cloudy breast** : sorrowful heart.

**grove** : group of trees.

**trample** : tread.

**hoary** : white with age.

**transcend** : surmount, surpass.



**glimmering** : shine faintly.

**wonted** : customary, conventional.

**thrall** : bondage.

**perspective** : view, vista.

## FULKE GREVILLE

Fulke Greville came to court with Sidney, and became a favourite of Elizabeth. His complete works were reprinted by Grosart in 1870. Of these the principal are the tragedies of *Mustapha* and *Alaham* which Charles Lamb called "Political Treaties, not plays" and which Swinburne described as "toughest of dramatic indigestibles." But these two works contain impressive choruses and fine poetry pointing to what Professor Geoffrey Bullough called Greville's 'Cosmic obsession.' Besides these two dramatic works, there is the collection of sonnets and songs entitled "*Caelica*." *Caelica* consisted of one hundred and nine poems. Of these, as Professor Bullough pointed out, only forty one are true sonnets. Thirty five are in six-line stanzas. Seventeen are in quatrains or in quatrains used with the couplets. Among the rest there are specimens of ottava rima, four-foot trochaics, rhymed sapphics, and other forms which bear witness to the experimental nature of Greville's muse. The sonnets are all Shakespearean in type. Occasionally he modified the true form by cutting out a quatrain or by adding one or two quatrains as his thought demanded. At times, he intermingled quatrains with six-line stanzas.

The sonnet in this selection has been taken from *Caelica* and is Shakespearean type. It is in praise of the general passion of love. One might profitably compare it to the first stanza of Coleridge's *Love* in this selection.

"All thoughts, all passions, all delights,  
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,  
All are but ministers of Love,  
And feed his sacred flame."

Coleridge works out this very theme against the background of a ballad. Fulke Greville restricts it to and fits it into the pattern of a sonnet. It should, therefore, be clear that a poem is not just equal to a theme it contains. Everything depends upon a memorable pattern into which a vividly felt imaginative experience—be its theme as horrible as the Pasiphae story—is woven,

**Explanations.**

**quintessence :** refined extract, most perfect embodiment, form or manifestation.

rais'd above all that

change of objects carry : Supreme to and distinguishable from other objects which, unlike it, are subject to change.

For glory's eternity.....

else obscures her name : the best fitted body to receive the soul of eternal glory, which will otherwise obscure itself in some other body, eternal glory being best associated with love.



## DRYDEN.

Hazlitt seems to have lent his authority to a terrible misunderstanding. In his fourth lecture on the English poets, he said that Dryden and Pope were masters of the artificial style of poetry in English, as Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, and Milton were of the natural. In the light of the perspective that time affords, one can say that Hazlitt was making a false distinction in support of the later legend, that between the Restoration and the late eighteenth century English poetry was deflected from its main channel. Matthew Arnold went so far as to say that Dryden and Pope, "though they may in a certain sense be masters of the art of versification.....are not classics of our poetry, they are classics of our prose". Even in 1933 A.E. Houseman took his cue from Arnold and asserted that during the time of Dryden and Pope "the place of poetry was usurped by some thing very different, which possessed the proper and specific name of wit". Is not Houseman harking back to Hazlitt's false distinction between poetry that is "natural" and poetry that is "artificial"?

At the present moment a strong reaction against the excessive respect of the later nineteenth century for the poetry of the Romantics has set in. Modern poets have turned to the age of Donne for their inspiration. As a result, such notions of the decadent romanticism as the exaggerated emphasis on "inspiration" the insistence on the difference between the 'genius' and the ordinary man, the distrust of imitation in poetry, the preference of emotion to thought, of spontaneity to controlled form, have begun to be discarded.

This explains the new enthusiasm in England for the poetry of the "metaphysicals" leading to a new and vital interest in the poetry of the Augustans, Dryden and Pope. In spite of Sir Herbert Read's enthusiastic support for, or Sir Maurice Bowra's balanced criticism on the romantic tradition, it is doubtful whether English poetry will return to it. What is certain at the moment is that the modern reader finds himself in a fortunate position for the appreciation of the poetry of Dryden and Pope. Of course, he is not to be hindered by the prejudices which misled the readers of the nineteenth century.

Mr. Eliot's *Homage to John Dryden*, and his later study point



to the high esteem and affection of the present age for Dryden. A greater critic of Dryden, Professor Bonamy Dobree praises the poet for his objectivity and "Miraculously flexible" diction. Professor Dobree contends that Milton injured English poetry because he lacked these qualities. Perhaps the critic is right in that Dryden's self-effectment and his ability to turn an abstract idea into great poetry would, indeed, appeal to the modern classical mind. Dryden wrote odes, epistles, elegies, complimentary addresses and politico-religious verse. His translations maintain their place as renderings and yet some of them are really original poems. Though he wrote few direct satires, a very powerful note of satiric comment runs through the body of his verse as well as his plays. What is really important about him is that his verse is always moulded partly by what he thought a poet ought to be, and what he should achieve. But there is in his poetry, as Professor Dobree puts it, "none of the yearning of the Romantics, the reachings out after the impalpable in the attempt to grasp the inapprehensible; vivid, actual imagination plays around the actions and passions of men as they live out their lives, in soul as well as in body. He does not confront us with profound searching sentiment, making us face the innermost nature of our being: but he has a firm grasp over a wide field, handling at no despicable level the eternal religious issues, and the scientific development of his age".

As far his diction, he uses, as far as he can, the precise word which is in tune with his ideas. One feels that he handles words surely and with extraordinary economy. One wonders whether Donne's witty *satires* would not be more ingratiating with Dryden's discipline of words. It must be pointed out that Dryden's diction is the language that might be spoken by men to men. It is, like Donne's, forceful, expressing deep thoughts in common language. But, at the same time, it is unlike Donne's, in so far as there is no tortuousness, none of the "exhaustive nagging after effect" of the metaphysicals in it. In other words, it has not poetic virtuosity of the kind one gets in Swinburne. Dryden insisted on rhyme which, he thought, would redeem English verse from obfuscation. He held that rhyme "bounds and circumscribes the fancy. For imagination in a poet is a faculty so wild and lawless, that, like an high-ranging spaniel, it must have clogs tied to it, lest it outran judgement". In his *Dedication of the Rival Ladies*, he said that a poet should balance fancy and judgement

in order to bring out the richest and clearest thoughts, fancy being used for imagination. He maintained this view in his *Dedication of the Aeneis*. Perhaps it is well to quote his own words:— “And whereas poems which are produced by the vigour of imagination have only a gloss upon them at the first which time wears off, the words of judgement are like the diamond: the more they are polished, the more lustre they receive”. This view is certainly in a marked contrast with that of the romantics who, as Sir Maurice Bowra said, made a god of imagination. Dryden did not ignore “number” namely, melodious prosody. He stressed “the harmony of words” which, he believed, elevated “the mind to a sense of devotion.” This would seem to raise what Professor Dobree calls “the eternal question of pleasure and profit, of the aesthetic as against the moral.” In his *Defence of the Essay of Dramatic Poesy* he clearly states that pleasure is “the chief, if not the only end of poesy.” Twenty years after he repeats this view in his *Discourse on satire, the instruction*’ being “but a bare and dry [philosophy]” without the means of pleasure. So, while he thought of words, he did not ignore the idea and the structure which were more important things to consider—words being only the colouring of “the poem picture.” The emphasis is always on the full-bodied quality of the poem. This makes Dryden a great poet. However, he left to posterity to judge him on the basis of his work. In all humility he thought that they would not at least “deny that [he] was a good versifier.”

The two extracts from Dryden’s *Absalom and Achitophel* and the song from the sparkling *Marriage-A-La-Mode* can hardly represent Dryden in this selection. Perhaps they will never do for one offering, a defence for Dryden. But, they will certainly be more than sufficient as specimens of the work of the poet within the short space possible here. *Absalom and Achitophel* is in the words of Dr. Ian Jack, “witty heroic poem”, which needs a little historical information on the part of the reader for its proper impact. It sets, as it was meant to do, a strong feeling against Lord Shaftesbury, leader of the Whig Party. The Whig Party was scheming to exclude the Catholic Duke of York from the succession in order to put the King’s natural son, the Duke of Monmouth, on the throne. Dryden plunges the reader into his subject. The opening lines, calculated to excuse Charles II for his virile manifestations, are really superb



"In pious times, ere priestcraft did begin,  
 Before polygamy was made a sin;  
 When man on many multiplied his kind,  
 Ere one to one was cursedly confin'd...  
 Then Israel's monarch after heaven's own heart,  
 His vigorous Warmth did variously impart  
 To wives and slaves; and, wide as his command,  
 Scatter'd his Maker's image thro' the land."

Is it not mainly through an expression, which is the most important point in art, that the poet makes his reader accept his case? One feels through the more than thousand lines that it is not by what the poet says but how he says it that he appeals. Theoretically, is it not possible to have a good poem on a broonslick? Here is the satiric description of the English, the Jews of the poem: "God's pamper'd people, whom, debauch'd with ease,  
 No King could govern, nor no God could please;  
 (Gods they had tried of every shape and size,  
 That god-smiths could produce, or priests devise.)"

Here is the climax in the temptation scene where Achitophel (Shaftsbury) weaves his net round Absalom (Monmouth), evoking from him the passionate remark:

"Why am I scanted by a niggard birth?  
 My soul disclaims the kindred of her earth,  
 And made for empire, whispers me within  
 'Desire for greatness is a godlike sin.'

What is to be noted specially in this poem is that Dryden keeps his grip unrelaxed. Always in control, the poet varies the movement of the poem and eases the tension by introduction of characters who crowd upon the scene only to receive the little parcels of wit or venom. The most important is that of Achitophel, though Dryden thought that of Zimri (Buckingham) "worth the whole poem". However, the portrait of Shaftsbury is more ingratiating in that it causes more powerful poetry. The first extract in this selection will make it clear. The second extract is about Zimri (Buckingham). Dryden liked this character because, as he put it, "it was not bloody but ridiculous enough." The rhymed pentameter is the best fitted

Lines, 134—154 went thus in the first edition:

“As o'er the fragrant steams she bends her head

First he expands the glitt'ring forfex wide

T' inclose the lock: then joins it to divide:

The meeting points the sacred hair dissever

From the fair head, for ever, and for ever.” “All”,

said Pope, “that is between was added afterwards”.

**Resigned:** resigned himself.

**Sylph:** Elemental spirit of the air. In Paracelsus's system nymph, gnome, salamander were of water, earth, and fire respectively.

**Forfox:** Latin for ‘Sheers’.

**Line 152:** Pope wrote: “see Milton, Lib. vi 330, of Satan cut asunder by the angel Michael.”

**“For ever, for ever”:** To emphasise the fact that the hair could not unite again, as the bisected Sylph had done.

**Lines, 155, 156 flashed...rend:** Note the change of tense, which did not occur in the original version, where it was: “The living fires came flashing from her eyes.”





PART III

THE ROMANTICS AND THEIR  
PRECURSORS.

(CRITICISM)



## ROBERT BURNS

Burns strikes one in the matter of expressing an emotion. He does not generally rub in a nature or descriptive passage for its own beauty, without nailing it down with a fine bit of wisdom, or, what is often the case, a fine touch of personal emotion. Perhaps it would be hard to find, outside the works of Shakespeare and Chaucer, any finer touches of pathos.

In his candour and sincerity, Burns is unlike many modern poets. Whether it was love or ale, he was not ashamed to mention anything that gave him pleasure. While reading modern poets, one wonders what kind of men they were, there being no personality or no personal confession in their work. Though they live in England they prefer to mention Babylon. In their view, certain subjects, such as love and the moon are hackneyed. They write, therefore, obscurely on other things, forgetting that every great poet can make his own moon, and give it an entirely new beauty. They would seem to be English only in point of language. One is at a loss to understand what nationality they are in their vision. But Burns is invariably a Scotchman. Such thoughts as "Man was made to mourn", and "A man is a man for a' that" testify to his belonging to the common people. In his works, indeed, one hears the human heart beating. Like all great poets, Burns is rich in quotations, and is a splendid subject for the prentice hand of journalism.

The gift of spontaneous ease is the unique gift of Burns. Most of the poems of Burns are in dialect but may easily be mastered. Perhaps no understanding of the true worth of English poetry can be complete without some estimate of Burns' remarkable lyric genius. In the work of Burns are to be found personal effusion, sensibility, a keen love for nature, a wealth of imaginative fancy, a sympathetic interest in the poor and in animals. All this is what may be called the inner core of romanticism. His work is of a mixed nature — occasional verse (short poems, mere sketches one might say), realistic, imaginative verse sympathetically human (for example, the *Jolly Beggars*, *Tom o'Shanter* and others), the inoffensive mockery (gibe at Doctor Hornbook) ironical pieces like *Holy Willie's Prayer*, and the sterling strength and frankness cast in the ballad form of John Barleycorn. In addition to this, there is fresh and graceful simplicity of the idylls and elegies pointing to the atmosphere of tenderness and pathos.



## M'PHERSON'S FAREWELL

Neither Lockhart who called the poem 'a grand lyric' nor Carlyle who described it as "a wild, stormful song [dwelling] in our ear and mind with strange tenacity" was wrong. The poet designed it as an improvement of a well-known old rant, preserved by Herd and others, entitled "M'Pherson's Lament," which is said to have been written together with its air, by a Highland freebooter of the Gilderoy type a night or two before his execution. James M'Pherson, the hero and author is described as being a man of uncommon personal strength, and of rare courage and appearance, as well as an excellent performer on the violin. After holding the countries of Aberdeen, Banff, and Moray in fear for a number of years, during which a premium was on his head, he was at length run to the earth by Duff of Braco, an ancestor of the Earl of Fife. He was tried before the Sheriff of Banffshire, in November, 1700, along with certain gipsies who had been taken in his company. He was himself the son of gipsy woman. In prison, while he lay under sentence of death, he composed his "Lamet", commencing:

"I've spent my time in rioting,  
Debauch'd my health and strength;  
I squandered fast as pillage came,  
But fell to shame at length.  
But dauntingly and wantonly  
And rantingly I'll gae,  
I'll play a spring and dance it roun',  
Beneath the gallows-tree"

All but literally he did so. When brought to execution on the gallows on Banff, he is said to have played the tune on his violin which he offered to any friend who will have it for the asking. No one came forward. He indignantly broke the violin over his knee and threw away the fragments. Then he gracefully and proudly stood in to satisfy the law's demands, Burns transfuses the poem and fills it with his usual naivety—The lyrical e'lan is superb.

**Explanations.**

**dungeons dark:** dark prisons. **wretch:** miserable person.  
**destinie:** destiny, appointed lot.

- Homer :** the great Greek epic poet, who was regarded by the ancients as the author of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*,  
His date is variously placed between 1050 and 850 B. C.
- demesne :** an estate, possession, domain.
- Chapman :** George Chapman (1559-1634).  
He was a dramatist. Also he translated Homer.
- Watcher of the skies :** astronomer.
- his ken :** his knowledge.
- Cortez :** strict history credits the Spanish general Balboa (1475-1517) with the discovery of the Pacific Ocean of which he took possession for his King. But Cortez (1485-1549) also fought and conquered in these regions, and to him the first sight of the Pacific would be as the discovery of a new planet. Keats does not say that Cortez was the discoverer.
- Surmise :** Guess, conjecture.
- Darien :** the isthmus of Darien.



PART IV

SONGS FROM PLAYS

( CRITICISM )





## SONGS FROM PLAYS

Singing was a popular pastime of the Elizabethans. Even the novelists, influenced either by Sidney's *Arcadia* or by foreign fiction inserted songs into their stories. Dramatists who thought more in terms of the audience naturally included songs in their plays. The earliest English comedies, *Ralph Roister Doister* and *Gammer Gurton's Needle* contain songs. Lyly made great use of the expert singers in his service. His plays depend for their effect on his use of songs. Later on almost all the Elizabethan dramatists inserted songs in their plays. These songs were excellently adapted to their contexts in the plays. Perhaps a student of poetry cannot pass them over in silence in that they point to the great power of poetry in general. In a few essential words woven into a song, the Elizabethan dramatist would crystallize the entire situation of the whole play. From a short song it is possible to absorb the peculiar tone and atmosphere of the play. These songs, therefore, serve as excellent examples of the concentrated force of poetry. It goes without saying that poets writing plays for the last three hundred years have introduced songs in them. The merits of the songs in Elizabethan drama can be appreciated in the understanding of the failure of the poets of the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries in this respect. Their songs are generally an added embellishment and can be dispensed with. In the majority of Dryden's plays songs are as good as a loose ornament. There is a beautiful song in Coleridge's *Zapholia* ("A sunny shaft did I behold," etc.) but it is hardly fitted into the pattern of the play. Shelley's characters burst into a song at the least provocation. For instance, in his *Rosicrucian* the stranger inquired: "Can Ma'm'selle sing?" Eloise replied that she could. And there followed the song. Perhaps one would do well to assess *Songs from Plays* in this selection in the light of this perspective which history affords.

## I

**It was a lover.** The song was sung by two Pages in *As You Like It* (Act V, Sc. iii) to Touchstone and his sweetheart, Audrey who had just arranged to be married on the following day. Not only, does Shakespeare interrupt "the even road of blank verse" with this lovely music, but also, he makes the green-wood real. Of course, Shakespeare brilliantly avoids the besetting fault of the pastoral song (the tepid unreality) by the clarity of his images and the sudden



earliness of his diction. The spirit of the song is in consonance with the atmosphere of the play. This atmosphere the song certainly helps to create. This song has a six-line stanza, and the rhymes are particularly musical. It has "burthen" or chorus in which the two pages probably joined.

The rhythm and the music crystallizes the the whole situation of the play.

### Explanations.

**"a hey and ho...nonino** : sounds reflecting lightheartedness.

**ring time** : when they played kiss-in-the-ring or married.

**Carol** : song. **How life...flower** : short and, therefore, to be made most of.

## II

*Ariel's Songs.* These songs were sung by the "spirite" in *The Tempest* (Act I, sc.ii) when he is leading Prince Ferdinand to the place where Prospero is standing with his daughter Miranda. In the second song, the spirit suggests how the Prince's father lies drowned. Both songs are resiliently related to the design of the play. In his brilliant book, *Shakespeare's Use of Song*, Mr. Richmond Noble has analysed the poet's use of song. These songs are just lyrics to be sung to the lyre. The lyric is not to be restricted to its original meaning now, but it denotes those poems of varried pattern in which the poet gives expression to his own thoughts and feelings either directly or through some character which he has assumed for the moment. One may read Mr. Eliot's views on the subject which he discusses in the light of Herr Benn's 'Problem of Lyric Poetry' in his *Three Voices*.

### Explanations

**Courtised** : curtsied, bent your knees in salutation, **Kist** : kissed, **Whist** : (archaic) silent. **featly** : (archaic) smartly. **Coral** : substance (white, red or pink) secreted by tribes of marine polys for support and habitation.

## III

*Cupid and My Campaspe* is taken from Lyly's play, *Campaspe* (1581). It points to the conflict raging in Alexander's breast for his captive, the Theban Campaspe, and his desire for glory and his

consciousness of his duty. The song has the same theme as *Siren* by Daniel who upholds the glory of an active life of a warrior against the romantic fripperies that a lover's life has to offer. It is Ulysses there who seems to speak almost with the lips of the poet. The song is an index to the atmosphere of the prose play. It is also an example of a beautifully sustained conceit.

### Explanation.

**for kisses** : Whoever won had to kiss the other. **Cupid** : God of love, represented as a blind boy with quiver, bow and arrows.  
**his mother** : Venus, the Aphrodite of the Greeks, the Goddess of beauty and Love.

### IV

**Call for the Robin-red-Breast** is from Webster's *Vittoria Corombona* (*The White Devil*). It occurs in Act V., Sc. iv. of the play. It is better to quote Charles Lamb on this song : "I never saw anything like this dirge, except the ditty which reminds Ferdinand of his drowned father in *The Tempest*. As that is of the water, watery ; so this is of the earth, earthy. Both have that intenseness of feelings which seems to resolve itself into the elements which it contemplates".

( Charles Lamb, *Spec. of Eng. Dram. Poets* )

It is difficult to agree with Lamb when he calls the song in Shakespeare's play "Watery". The rest of Lamb's praise is all right. Cornelia, mother of Vittoria and Marcello, sings this song. She is distracted at the pathetic death of her son, Marcello. So far as the pathetic element of the play goes, this song expresses it with all the concentrated force of poetry. It is impossible to transfer it from this play to which it is organically related.

### Explanations.

**funeral dole** : funeral lamentation.

### V

**The Marriage Vow** is taken from the most lively of Dryden's comedies, *Marriage a-la-Mode* (1672), which embodies the quintessence of Restoration Comedy, the sex-antagonism so delicately handled by Congreve. Many of the Court and its flesh-flies at that period were



engaged in the desperate attempt to rationalise love, trying to conduct their lives on the assumption that sexual attraction was easily separable from affection, that jealousy was ridiculous, and that a husband was, almost by definition, a fool whose obvious destiny was to be cuckolded. A large part of the game of Restoration comedy was to show how disastrous, how contrary to common sense, the assumptions were; for this comedy was in the main classical 'artificial' comedy intent upon 'curing excess'. Far from being 'artificial', as it is commonly dubbed, it was very nakedly down to the earth, and had a direct bearing upon how life was lived. Dryden states the theme at once in this song. It should be compared with the song of the cuckoo mocking married men in Shakespeare's *Love's Labour's Lost*.

### **Explanation.**

**Passion is decayed**: there is no feeling of love left.

**loved out**: spent up.

**Explanations.**

**Had I wist:** Had I known.

**had not know my wing:** had not seen me fly.

**faltered:** stumble, stagger.



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## THE BALLAD.

In his short review of the ballad, Henry Sidgwick says that the ballad "is, and always has been, so far from being a literary form, that it is, in essentials, not literary, and has no single form. It is a *genre* not only older than the epic, older than tragedy, but older than literature, older than the alphabet. It is a lore, and belongs to the illiterate". There is a large measure of truth in Chesterton's exaggeration that "a man could almost leave a poem to his son to be finished as he would have finished it just as a man could leave a field to his son to be reaped as he would have reaped it". In English literature there do not appear to be ballads that can be assigned to early history, nothing that is pre-Chaucerian. The fourteenth and fifteenth century ballad, however, seems to have had its progenitors. Does not *Beowulf* suggest a collections of ballads that went into its composition ?

By the fourteenth century the ballad would seem to have lost its original spontaneity. However, it had benefited in other ways by the discipline which every art must sooner or later obey. No longer did it ally itself with music and dance. Its construction was now that of a plain story—still taken from the communal inheritance—with the shadow of the original accompaniments, namely refrain and repetition. Many of them retained their original dramatic form.

It is possible to trace the gradual perfecting of a given form of expression, and to see it practised in more polished and sophisticated form in modern literature. *But the ballad died.* Modern imitations of it are purely excursions into archaeology. The ballad form is something that can be constructed. If poetry were form alone, the ballad could be a current fashion in literature. But the ballad was more than a story in rhymes, with dialogue, or chorus. It was manifestation of a way of life that, for good or ill, cannot be recaptured under the conditions of a modern industrial world. It is difficult to inform an imitation ballad with the authentic beat of blood that underlay the ballad-proper. Whatever degree of individuality one may allow to the makers of the ballad, they were in the world, living their simple lives intensely. Of course, poetry survived, since it is the expression that survives material prosperity or material disaster. It survived in a different form. The

ballad that embodied the folk-story lingered on, growing more and more degenerate, made by strolling hacks and recited to the country folk who had no longer the impulse nor the opportunity to take a hand in the game. It survived in the broad sheets sold at country fairs or by unemployed ex-soldiers. Poetry took a different road; in the hands of specialised craftsmen it took shape in new forms, such as lyric, and drama.

The simplicity of the ballad form makes it a convenient one for the apprentice hand to use. The subject is any tale of life, embellished with incidents that may be imaginary or accurate in detail. No attempt is made to construct a background of locality nor is a definite time indicated for the action of the story. The tale's the thing.. All the art that ballad-writers practise is applied to the unfolding of the tale in a way that shall promptly grip the audience and maintain their interest to the finish. For example, *Chevy Chase* hurries through a formal payment of homage to the king, and, at once, gives in a nutshell the burden of the ballad. Many devices were used to sustain the interest of the reader. A dramatic shape was given to the story by the use of direct speech as in :

"The King sits in Dunfermline town,  
Drinking the blude red wine,  
'O where will I get a skeely skipper,  
To sail this new ship of mine.

### Sir Patrick Spens.

The characteristic feature of the mediaeval ballad, which echoes the older form when the ballad was accompanied by music and dance, was the trick of calling upon the audience to "join in" the chorus.

It was a certain way of getting the people to feel that they had an interest in the performance. In *Binnorie* the second line occurs as a refrain throughout the ballad. And further inheritance from the probable early form of ballad is the repetition of words and phrases found in later forms, as in *Sir Patrick Spens*—"They had sailed a league, a league;"

The metrical form of the ballad was a rough approximation to stanzas made up of alternate lines of iambic tetrameter and iambic



trimeter, the second and fourth lines rhyming. This was the predominating rhythm, but many irregularities passed unnoticed by makers and listeners whose main interest was the action of the ballad. So long as the story developed, the ballad-maker might commit faults of composition within the convention, tripping occasionally in his rhythm, repeating words to finish a stanza with no fresh step in the progress of the story, taking many a license in his rhymes. Perhaps modern ballads have scrupulously avoided these flaws. Are they any the better for that? Not being the product of conditions which made the early ballad unique in literature, they are, after all, an imitation product, and not the product of the pioneer inspiration that makes the original something rare.

The *Wife of Usher's Well* and *Binnorie* are old ballads, that is, popular ballads, Burns' *Bonnie Jean*, Coleridge's *Love*, Keats's *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* and Masfield's *Of The Moorish King who Lost Granada* are fairly good examples of the modern imitations, otherwise known as literary ballads. All these six ballads are included in this selection and are as good as can be possible in this almost dead form of poetry.



## THE WIFE OF USHER'S WELL

Here is an old ballad telling, with artless simplicity, the story of a woman who lost her three "stout and stalwart sons". She finds it difficult to reconcile herself to the misfortune. Her bitterness finds its expression in her wish for the wind and the troubles, with which life is fraught for people like her, never to come to an end. However, on St. Martin's Day, November 11, she dreams that her sons are well and, therefore, expected home. She prepares for a feast in the dream. Meanwhile her sons hear the cock crow and, reluctantly though, leave as all ghosts must at that time. The introduction of this dream is abrupt to fit in with the ballad manner. Moreover, it makes the pathos of the story all the more felt.

Poetry is anthropocentric and, therefore, incurably childlike. In the circumstances, it will not be correct to object to the strange phenomenon of the woman's dream being partly the experience of her dead children's ghosts. Such objections are indeed, the result of the modern consciousness which would seem to make poetry difficult.

**Explanation.**

<b>Carline</b> :	Country.	<b>Sheugh</b> :	trench.	<b>Fashes</b> :	troubles.
<b>Syke</b> :	marsh.	<b>Channerin</b> :	fretting.	<b>Make</b> :	mate.
<b>Gin</b> :	if.	<b>Maun</b> :	must.		

## BINNORIE.

This old ballad, Scotch in origin, is unquestionably beautiful, naive and dramatic. The story develops speedily so that many faults of composition are glossed over. The inconstancy of the knight who pretended to be in love with the elder sister, the jealousy of the elder sister, and the pathetic condition of the younger one are admirably thrown into high relief. The dialogue makes it dramatic. The words in the dialect succeed in carrying the reader into the rarefied atmosphere of the remote past.

The last two lines, which reveal that the girl happened to be the harper's sister, rounds the ballad off to a dramatic close.

## Explanations.

**two** : two.    **bour** : bower.    **mill-dam** : dam put across stream to make it available for mill.  
**abune a' thing** : above everything.    **vexed** : hurt, distressed.  
**sair** : sore.    **brast** : burst.    **stane** : stone.    **sma'** : smock also small.    **Jaw** : deep water.    **gowd** : gold.    **foul fa' the hand** : may that man (hand) be cursed whom I shall marry.    **gars me** : compels me.    **swimmin** : swimming.    **mermaid** : half human being, with head and trunk of woman and tail of fish.    **lasten** : last.  
**'Was "Wae to my sister, fair Ellen"** : this makes the ballad round off to an unexpected end, therefore, a dramatic close.



## BONIE JEAN

Burns celebrated in this graceful complimentary ballad Jean M'Murdo, the daughter John M'Murdo, chamberlain to the Earl of Queensbury. It is wrong to say that Burns composed it to celebrate his wife, Jean Armour. "The personal charms", writes the poet, "the purity of mind, the ingenuous naivete of heart and manners in my heroine are, I flatter myself, a pretty just likeness of Miss M'Murdo in a cottage."

## Explanations.

**Lass** : a girl.    **Kirk** : church.    **a'** : all.  
**ay** : yes, always.    **wark** : work.    **sae merrilie** : so merrily.  
**blythest** : blithest, happiest.    **lint-white** : flaxen-coloured. cf.  
 "Lassie wi' the lint-white locks".    **Brawest** : most handsome, gallant.  
**owsen** : oxen.    **kye** : kine, cows.    **naigies** : horses.  
**goed** : went.    **wi'** : with.    **tryste** : an appointment, cattle fair.  
**lang** : long.    **wist** : knew.    **stown** : stolen.    **na** : no.  
**wad** : would.    **weel** : well.    **loup** : lowp, leap.  
**tauld** : told.    **ae** : one.    **ilke** : each.    **lo'e** : love.  
**tent** : take heed, mark.    **byre** : cow house.    **drudge** : slave.  
**naething** : nothing.    **amang** : among.    **twa** : two.

## LOVE.

This lyrical ballad, first published in the Second Edition (1800) of the *Lyrical Ballads*, is, as Coleridge himself said to one of his friends, "inimitable". The poet seems to have completely abandoned himself to this charming story of love and romance, letting his heart guide him through the echoing melodies of its music. The atmosphere is mediæval and reminds one of the legends of Malory and romances of Spenser. The only weak point in the poem is the too conscious art of the poet. However, it is never too obtrusive. The metre of the poem is an adaptation of the English ballad measure. The marvellous simplicity of language and the repetition of lines and half lines make such a tuneful music as engrosses the attention of the reader. It is, indeed, a matter of a great surprise that Coleridge should have created this charming poem out of simple elements. It resembles *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* in simplicity, subtlety of psychological analysis, and the power of representing a scene vividly by a few strokes of pen. Herford laid special emphasis on its "delicate and subtle psychology", and compared it to *The Rime of Ancient Mariner*. Saintsbury praised the opening stanza of the poem, which, he said served as the motto and defence of the largest, the most genuine, the most delightful part of poetry." All the same, Saintsbury held that the poem was "flawed by a certain amount of namby-pamby from which none of the Lake School escaped when they tried passion."

**Explanations.**

**Mortal frame** : the human body.      **ministers** : servants, functionaries.

**ruined towers** : (here is a touch typical of romantic literature)

**Genevieve** : a typical romantic feminine name.

**Burning brand** : a burning torch, useful sign on shields as symbol of the flame of love.

**fiend** : devil, evil spirit.      **expiate** : to make atonement (for sin).

**ditty** : song.



## LA BELLE DAM SANS MERCI.

The type of ballad that was written round enchantment is marvellously achieved in Keats's *La Belle Dam Sans Merci*. This ballad may be compared with the old *Wife of Usher's Well*. As the comparison will show both are compound of the credible and the incredible. The Wife's three sons and the Knight-at-arms are ordinary human beings, moving in a world that is the world one knows. And, in both poems they meet with adventures in the supernatural. This must be the most difficult type to re-create. Keats's version is a splendid example. Keats's background, his series of scenes, his choice of detail and his actual vocabulary make it impossible for the reader to escape the intensity of his spell. Perhaps Keats achieved a great success in this poem because it reflected his intense personal experience. The Keats-Fanny Brawne relationship would appear to be an exact parallel of that of Knight-at-arms and the *femme fatale* of Keats's poem. It is interesting to recall the fourth chapter of Professor Mario Praz's *The Romantic Agony*, entitled, *La Belle Dam Sans Merci*. Professor Praz associates the *femme fatale* theme from the Greeks to the Romantics, concentrating on the Romantics who, he asserts were decadent because sex was their main inspiration. It is difficult to disagree with Mr. Wyndham Lewis who calls Professor Praz's book a "gigantic pile of satanic bric-a-bac."

**Explanations.**

**sedge** : a kind of grass growing in swamps and rivers.

**Haggard** : lean, hollow-eyed.

**Lily on the brow.....fast withereth too** : that is, your face and cheeks are losing colour and are withering from the effect of your illness.

**Zone** : a girdle for the waist, **Moan** : (Archaic) music.

**Manna** : a sweet juice, name of the food sent by the Lord to the Israelites in the desert of Arabia. **Grot** : cave.

**thrall** : slavery. **glaom** : dust. **sojourn** : to dwell somewhere for a short journey.

## THE MOORISH KING WHO LOST GRANADA.

John Masefield is a very interesting composer of modern ballads. His work has a particular significance because of its origins. The ballad, selected here is *Of The Moorish King Who Lost Granada*. Among other things, it maintains the popular dialogue form :

The Queen turned and asked, "Why they delayed ?"

The others replied to her: "Queen, the King beheld Granada..."

Moreover, virility, and rhythm—which are fundamental qualities of ballad-making, are admirably reproduced in this ballad. What is to be noted specially is that the poet shows no preoccupation with an idea or mood. There is no complicated verse-form, no unfamiliarity of incident or of word, such as one finds in Masefield's many contemporaries. The poem points to the mastery of literary expression, the power of describing a common experience of King Chico who lost Granada.

**Explanations.**

**Granada** : a province in Spain at the foot of Siera Nevada.

**the flower of the moors** : the choicest men among the moors.

**Athenian slave** : a slave of Athens, a Greek slave.

**lion-heated** : brave. **forded** : crossed water by wading.

**spating** : the river-stream was in spate, viz, flooded.

**stirrup** : rider's foot-rest consisting of iron loop with flattened base hung by a strap, iron attachment let into saddle. **Sodden** : wet.

**bitter stony** : hard. **lingered** : stopped. **groves** : group of trees.

**minarets** : slender turrets, generally connected with mosques, from which muezzin calls people to prayer.

**the wheel of fortune alters** : fortune is depicted with a wheel as symbol of ups and downs.

**unlucky dice are cast** : a reversal of fortune has taken place in that I have lost you (Granada).

**vanguard** : the part of army marching in front. **anguish** : pain.





However, Zeus allowed her to spend six months of the year on earth and six months with Pluto.

**gloomy breast** : the bosom of Pluto who lives in the nether world.

**snatch'd from her flowers** : while she was gathering flowers in the vale of Enna in Sicily.

**Dryads** : wood nymphs.

**holly's green eternity** : holly is an evergreen shrub ; the poet, therefore, calls it green eternity.

**gloats** : feeds its mind upon lustfully, but here it means that the squirrel is pleased. **garners** : stores.

**luscious** : rich, richly sweet in smell and taste, sickly sweet.

**main** : sea, ocean. **spells** : turns of work.

**drowned past** : the past lost in the depths of memory.

**gray upon the grey** : far, far away.

**coronal** : circlet for the head, a wreath, a garland.





## THOMAS HARDY

**To the Moon** will linger in the memory on the basis of the clear expression of the poet's sincere feeling. Here is the wistful statement of a poet who is sensitive to the thought of his day. It is interesting to compare this poem, in point of substance, to the agnosticism of *The City of Dreadful Night*, *Atalanta in Calydon* and Fitzgerald's *Omar Khayyam* which point to the vanity of life and are god-hating performances. It is also in consonance with the Hardy's tragic view of life. In reply to the question,

"Is life much, or no?" the Moon says :  
 "O, I think of it, often I think of it  
 As a show  
 God ought surely to shut up soon,  
 As I go."

These lines would seem to be the end-product of a line of thought as one finds it in Butler's *Analogy*, or in these verses of James Thomson :

"Who is most wretched in this dolorous place ?  
 I think myself ; yet I would rather be  
 My miserable self than He, than He  
 Who formed such creatures to His own disgrace ?  
 Not for the temples to Thy glory built,  
 Would I assume the ignominious guilt,  
 Of having made such men in such a world."

There is the contemporary relevance of the situation here in that the poem reflects doubts and unbelief which, as Mr Noel Annan put it, were never stilled during the Victorian age. Neither Dryden nor Pope would be expected to write so subjectively of the Moon. Hardy does not remain outside the Moon. Surely Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, and Swinburne would have written like Hardy. It is rewarding to contrast Hardy's method with that of W. H. Davies in the *The Moon*, in this selection, Part IX.

Moreover, there is a new rhythm in this poem.

**Explanations**

**Past your Prime :** past your best part (Cf. in the prime of life)

**Sore ;** unhappy.

**Shudderful :** Those which cause shudder, shocking.

**Mused on :** thought about.

**To the human tune :** of human interest, that is, from men.

**on my rounds :** during my daily rotation.

**show ;** flimsy, that which appears to the sight but is actually an illusion.

**Shut up :** stop it all.

# **PART VIII**

## **LIGHT VERSE CRITICISM )**





## LIGHT VERSE

There was the development of a new kind of light poetry in the nineteenth Century. One might call it poetry for children or nonsense poetry. The old village and small-town community having broken down, the family alone sprang into life as a real social unit with the parent-child relationship as the only real social bond. This kind of poetry is useful in that it appeals to the unconscious, the poetry for children being an attempt to find a world where the divisions of class, sex, and occupation do not operate. So the masters of this kind of poetry in Victorian Age were as successful as Walt Disney has been at the present time. Lewis Carroll and Edward Lear became very popular.

The three poems included here, Brownrigg's *Pied Piper of Hamelin*, Lewis Carroll's *Humpty Dumpty's Song*, and Edward Lear's *The Owl and The Pussy-Cat* are excellent examples of this kind of poetry.

1. *Humpty Dumpty's Song* is from Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking-Glass* (1872) which, together with his *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865), was illustrated by Sir John Tenniel. *Humpty Dumpty's Song* appeals, as his other books do, to children. Even for grown-up people it has a strange inventive absurdity, humour, and curious logic. There is so much poetry available at present on ideals and ideas. From the critical point of view these ideas or ideals hardly help the art of this kind of poetry. One wonders whether *Humpty Dumpty's Song* should not be preferable to the poetry on high-sounding ideas which push poetry outside the frontiers of art, being rammed with a purpose. The rhythm, rhyme, and the swift movement of this poem are really ingratiating.

**Explanations.**

**went hop :** I became excited.

**went thump :** my heart beat heavily.

**cockscrew :** screw to draw the cork.

## THE OWL AND THE PUSSY-CAT

This poem is by Edward Lear (1812-1888), the famous author of *The Book of Nonsense* which he wrote for the grandchildren of his patron, the earl of Derby. Besides this, he wrote many nonsense songs.

One can imagine how children would appreciate the four characters in this poem, the owl, the pussy-cat, the piggy-wig and the turkey. The Owl and the pussy-cat set out with all the amorous ceremonials in a pea-green boat fully provided with honey. Moreover, they had a pound note in which their money was wrapped up. At the expiry of a year and a day they reached their destination which has the Bong-Tree as its landmark. They negotiate the purchase of their wedding-ring with the Piggy-wig *who keeps the ring at the end of his nose*. The bargain is closed for a shilling. Then the turkey marries them. Everything would seem to be logical. The whole business is rounded off with a feast of such delicacies as mince and slices of quince, and with a dance in the moonlight night.

The metre and rhythm of this poem are in consonance with the simplicity of adventure of this story. It is a matter of common experience how children playfully marry their dolls and hear about the simple human incidents attributed to birds and beasts. The humour of the poem must be noted.

**Explanations.**

**Piggy-wig :** small pig (it also means a dirty child)



## THE PIED PIPER OF HARELIN.

This is a grotesque poem but extremely beautiful. It is an old story full of humour and extravaganza. In order to enjoy it properly, it should be read aloud. Browning wrote it for the delight of William Macready, the young son of Charles Macready. The style of the poem must be noted. Words like 'noddy' "noodle" "noncheon" must be amusing for children.

## Explanations.

**spied** : saw. **Ditty** : song, poem. **Vermin** : mammals and birds injurious to game crops, etc. e.g. foxes, weasels, rats, mice (in this poem 'rats'). **Vats** : large tubs. **Kegs** : small barrels. **Sprat** : a fish. **sharps and flats** : shrieking noises (both these words are musical terms). **Noddy** : simpleton, noodle. **glowns lined with ermine** : for the City Fathers, ermine being the name of an animal and also of its fur. **obese** : fat. **consternation** : fear, dismay. **guilder** : obsolete gold coin of Netherlands. **paunch** : belly. **glutinous** : here hungry to excess, gluten is the name of an animal secretion, swarthy sunburnt, dark. **the trump of doom** : the trumpet (which the angel will blow on the Judgement Day and hearing which the dead will rise from their graves): This is a Semitic belief. **pie** : with colours irregularly arranged : This was the Piper's dress. **dangled** : hung. **old-fanged** : worn out, shabby. **Vampire bats** : bats which suck blood. **adept** : master. **tawny** : brownish-yellow, tan coloured. **tripe** : entrails, **psalter** : a medieval instrument like a dulcimer. **nuncheon** : food, luncheon. **punchion** : a short post. **pecked** : thrust forward (impudently). **claret, moselle etc** : all costly wines. **replenish** : fill. **butt** : wine cask. **Rhenish** : a German wine. **Poke** : pocket, bag. **Prime** : first. **bate a stiver** : take even the smallest coin less. **pottage** : soup. **ribald** : irreverent jester. **justling** : jostling, rubbing against each other. **on the rack** : in great pain. **bereft** : deprived of. **fallow** : reddish yellow. **burgher's pate** : citizen's head (contemptuous). **There is said to be a saying of Christ** : It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to go to heaven. **tabor** : small drum especially one to accompany the pipe. **hostlery or tavern** : inn, a place of refreshment. **trepanned** : trapped, deceived. **score** : bill, payment due.





PART IX

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY POETRY  
( CRITICISM )



## EDMUND BLUNDEN

**Forefathers** : is an excellent example of simplicity in language. It is also naive. These qualities remind one of John Clare who wrote of the rustic life in a satisfactory manner. The new note in the poem is the query :—

“Unrecorded, unrenowned,  
Man from whom my ways begin,  
Here I know you by your ground,  
But I know you not within—  
All is mist, and there survives  
Not a moment of your lives.

Like the bee that now is blown  
Honey-heavy on my hand,  
From the toppling tancy throne  
In the green tempestuous land,—  
I'm in clover now, nor know  
Who made honey long ago.”

This poem is in simple six-line stanzas. The lines used are the old rhymed tetrameters of English poetic tradition. This would seem to be best fitted for the pace of country life in the days of *Forefathers* ! *Forefathers* is among so many contemporary poems which remind one of Mr. Hardy's remark that there “is no poetry ; but the new poet—if he carry the flame on further (and if not, he is no new poet)—comes with a new note. And that new note is it that troubles the critical waters.” This is certainly the opinion of many moderns who are not prepared to set store by what is called ‘modern’ poetry. It is, indeed, a poet who can answer the query as to the secret of “forefathers”. Here is Hardy in his *Night in the Old Home* :

“—O let be the Wherefore ! We fevered our years not thus :  
Take of Life what it grants, without question !

they answer me seemingly.

“Enjoy, suffer, wait : spread the table here freely like us,  
And, satisfied, placid, unfretting, watch Time away beamingly !”



**Explanations**

- Smock** : Smock-frock, field labourer's outer linen garment of Shirt-like shape and with upper part closely gathered.
- Crook** : Hook, hooked staff,      **Toiled** : Worked hard.
- Lolled** : Stand, sit or recline in lazy attitude.
- hatchet** : light short-handled axe.
- Glade** : Clear space between forest trees.
- Wooings** : Love, amorous practices.
- Scrawled** : mentioned.
- pith and thew** : pith and marrow, of great vigour, energy, and force.
- Whom the city never called** : who never left the village.
- quill** : quill-pen      **Hold a quill** : literate.
- forge** : smithy, blacksmith's hearth or fireplace with bellows.
- All is mist** : all is unknown.      **Honey heavy** : full of honey.
- toppling** : tottering.      **tansy-throne** : (her) seat on a herb with yellow flowers and bitter aromatic leaves.

## W. H. DAVIES

**The Moon** is to be contrasted with Hardy's *To the Moon*. The poem of Davies is artlessly simple. The beauty of the moon takes hold of the poet. He tries to express the feelings that the moon arouses in him. The test to be applied is whether the poet's thoughts, although commonplace, are woven into his subjects. The objectivity of the poet and the clarity of his thought would appear to throw back to Dryden and Pope.

*A Bird's Anger*. The new note of this poem is sounded in the theme. The song of the lark suggested to the poet thoughts altogether different from those in the earlier English poetry. Is not there a great contrast between the theme of this poem and the passionate ascription of Shelley to the sweetness and wonder of the skylark's songs? That the "sweet martin" becomes a "wild screaming fire of angry song", of which Davies will gladly hear the end, is to be compared with Wordsworth's

"Happy, happy, Liver,  
With a soul as strong as a mountain river,  
Pouring out praise to the Almighty Giver," or  
to James Hogg's—

"Bird of the wilderness,  
Blithesome and cumbersome!"

Of course, the basis of one's judgement of the poem cannot be the personal opinions of the poet. The point to be made is that the poet admirably succeeds in getting his emotion across to the reader. The poem is, indeed, charming an account of its pictorial quality, its whimsical tenderness, and its record of a model. However, there is a phrase of four words which interferes with its verbal beauty.



## FRANCIS THOMPSON

**To a snowflake** is a testimony to Thompson's efficient handling of his lyrical instrument. It is in harmony with *The Hound of Heaven* which is one of the most blazing inspirations of the poet. In this poem also there is a mystic touch. It is interesting to compare it with Blake's *The Tiger*. Something special has to be said for the imagery and the excellent synthesis of the intellectual and the emotional in Blake's poem. However, the younger poet's poem makes the same impact on one's mind. The exquisite wording, the deep devotionism, the sense of wonder, and the marvellous overwhelming contrast between the might of the Maker and the frailty of snowflake produced by Him. Each phrase, each word is beautiful. All this is certainly in the tradition of English poetry. One need not add that the poem is in "speech-rhythm", with quite wonderful rhyming.

**Explanation.**

**Devisal** : Scheme, plan.

**filigree** : delicate, light, frail.

**fragilely, surely** : of delicate frame and yet having a convincing form.

**argentine** : of silver, silvery.

**to lust his mind** : to satisfy his passionate desire.

**Insculped** : sculptured, embossed, carved, moulded in relief.

**graver** : tool for engraving, burin.

## RALPH HODGSON.

**Time, You Old Gipsy Man :** The poet has most appropriately likened Time to a jogging gipsy. Of course, it appears to fly only to those who are so busy as not to take notice of it. One wonders why the old man is said to have tightened his rein under Paul's dial. Perhaps he got there at twelve o'clock and wondered which end of the great clock's leisurely function really pointed to noon! Perhaps there may be some other interpretation, one of the beauties of poetry being that it sets one wondering what actually the poet meant. And, one wonders in vain.

The poet is modest in his demand so that he asks Time to stay only for one day. Perhaps this is the most effective way of bringing home to the reader the love of life, which is implicit in this entreaty of the poet.

The poem is excellently associative, full of colour. There are pictures and pretty conceits. It is, indeed, what one may call the poetry of hearing, seeing, and knowing. Its music with short jolly rhythms has a great charm. It is possible that some serious-minded people will fail to respond to the poem. But, it is really a poem that would put one on one's literary mettle.

**Explanations.**

**Jennet :** a small beautiful Spanish horse.

**Festoon :** hang wreaths round you.

**May :** hawthorn blossom.      **Crush :** a crowded gathering.

**Now blind in womb :** not yet built.



## JOHN MASEFIELD.

These lines included here have been taken from Masefield's *Reynard the Fox* which contains 2660 lines. Perhaps these lines will stimulate the reader to read the whole poem, if not for anything else, at least to find out what happened to the fox ultimately.

As a specimen, however, this extract will serve to bring out Masefield's pictorial power, his open-air quality, his "tantivy" measure suggesting most appropriately the gallop across the country, his beautiful epithet and similes, and his rhymed couplet which, though not of the same length of line, recalls Chaucer. The measure fits in with a description of a 'hare-and-hounds' run across country.

Perhaps it is well to quote J. C. Squire on this poem: "*In Reynard the Fox* sympathy for the fox did not preclude recognition of the fact that what most people enjoy is everything except killing the fox, and that to many hunting is a means of intensifying not merely their sense of the delight of physical activity with a spice of risk, but the beauty of earth and sky and season." It is a new note in consonance with that which W. H. Hudson, Charles G. D. Roberts, Henry Williamson, Francis Pitt, and many others have sounded in modern prose. But, many poets since ancient times have written on the relationship.

### Explanations.

**foul scorn**: absolute contempt. **haven**: harbour, refuge.

**croaked on**: on which ravens were creaking.

**berth**: proper place, sleeping place. **terrier**: hardy dog with digging propensity. **put on steam**: felt vigorously, sustained himself courageously.

**buoy**: anchored float showing navigable course or reefs.

**cutter**: small single masted vessel rigged like sloop with running bowsprit.

**gleam**: faint light. **sheath**: inveseing membrane, tissue or skin.

**gannet**: a sea bird, the solan goose.

**hurtle**: clashing sound. **Kestrel**: small hawk.

**peewit**: Pewit, lapwing.

**Curlew**: wading bird with long slender bill.

**gaunt** : grim, desolate looking.      **galloping rally** : fresh energy.

**romping** : (slang) getting along easily.

**"Nose between paws... Gone to earth** : resting underground he would hear huntsmen say to the bounds that he (fox) has gone to earth".

**gadding** : Rove, wander.      **Dip** : downward slope.      **droop** : slope.

**beech-clump** : cluster of beeches.      **boulder** : large block of wheather-worn stone.

**pasque flowers** : anemone with bell-shaped purple flowers.

**Rabin** : the huntsman.

**thud** : low dull sound as of blow on soft thing.      **pads** : paws.

**clover** : trefoil used for fodder.      **earthed** : ran to earth.

**Sarsen** : sandstone boulder on chalk downs.      **paling** : fence.

**Slither** : slide unsteadily, go with irregular slipping motion.

**dithered** : trembling.      **gorse** : prickly yellow-flowered shrub.

**ramp** : upward bend, slope.      **sidled** : went obliquely.

**scampared** : ran impetuously.

## SIEGFRIED SASSOON

*Morning Express*. What is charming in this short poem is its concentration upon seemingly unimportant details, its avoidance of the so-called "poetic diction", and its faithful description of an everyday event. All this is a new note. In support of his theory of poetic diction, Wordsworth wrote such bald lines as :-

"A Mr. Wilkinson, Cleargyman....."

But, it must be pointed out that simple diction in poetry is possible for great poets. A seemingly bald expression may be, as Arnold pointed out, "as bald as the mountain tops are bald". It depends on the right conception on the part of the poet.

Can it be said that *Morning Express* is bald?

**Explanations.**

**pools of.....light**: drenched in light. **Trundle**: roll. **volleying**: emitting noisily (a vivid description of "vapour" coming out). **resplendent**: brilliant. **to hoist and plunder**: one wonders why officials be resolved to plunder, perhaps the poet means that the officials lift and take goods hurriedly and forcibly as if they were plundering. **rumble**: bring milk in vessels and make rumbling noise. **clang and clack**: everyone who has the experience of having seen a train start will be familiar with these sounds. Note how the poet creates an atmosphere of sound by such words as "rumble", 'clang' and 'clack'. **folded flock**: passengers, **the monster**: the train. **grunts 'Enough,**: *Tightening his load* **of links with pant and puff**: How vivid is the description of the train starting! It is an admirable example of sound echoing sense.



## ROBERT BRIDGES

*London Snow* will be an answer to those denigrators of Robert Bridges who complained that he did not know how to write metre. In this poem one witnesses the triumphant marriage of speech-rhythms with traditional forms. One reads the verse here as if it were ordinary prose, fresh subtleties would appear to crowd in, so that the rhythm imaged forth perfectly the picture which imagination imposed on the words and lines. Perhaps the poem is the most consummate metrical achievement in English language. The words seem to follow the movement of the flakes, pausing whenever they pause, drifting aside when they drift aside. They find their way down unhurriedly and casually and yet certainly :—

“When men were all asleep the snow came flying,  
In large white flakes falling on the city brown,  
Stealthily and perpetually setting and loosely lying,  
Hushing the latest traffic of the drowsy town ;  
Deadening, muffling, stifling its murmurs failing ;  
Lazily and incessantly floating down and down ;  
Silently sifting and veiling road, roof and railing.”

It is, indeed, so convincing in its perfection that all those unfavourably inclined towards the poet so far, were conciliated.

**Explanations.**

**sifting** : sprinkling.      **crevices** : chinks, fissures.      **uncompacted** : not closely packed.      **crystal manna** : manna was food supplied spiritually to Israelites, any spiritual nourishment, snow is crystal manna for children in that it falls from the sky.      **creak and blunder** : producing harsh noise, they stumble in or move in blindly.      **sombre** : gloomy in looks.



## J. C. SQUIRE

*Late Snow* is to be profitably compared to *London Snow*, both being the most beautiful poems about the English winter scene. From the formal view-point it is as interesting as *London snow*. The verse reproduced the sudden rumble of train passing through a snow-covered country. The poet obtains this effect largely through his masterly use of the long "O" sounds.

**Explanation.**

**Interminably** : endlessly. **"Singly in the snow the ghosts...into nothingness gliding"** : a vivid description of trees covered with snow, looking like ghosts outlined in pencil ; and then these trees disappearing like ghosts as the train moves on. **"O untroubled... shadows"** : the vast space covered with snow appeared to the poet as moving shadows because, actually, the train is moving. It is all shadowless because there is no sunshine.

**"But I thought of...snow on her back"** : The poet rounds it off with a note of sympathy for a mother-bird protecting her young ones against the snow by sitting over them, with snow on her back.

## FRANCIS BRETT YOUNG.

*The Quails.* (In the south of Italy the peasants put out the eyes of a captured quail so that its cries may attract the flocks of spring migrants into their nets.)

Thematically the poet presents here the same problem as in Masefield's *Reynard the fox*. It is possible to examine how these two poets set out to handle almost the same theme. The main point is to see which of them is more successful in getting his ideas across to the reader.

F. B. Young is very clear in his moving picture, using "free" verse, rhymeless, and with speech-rhythms throughout. This gives him an opportunity of ranging at freedom. He rams home the idea that pity must survive. This he would seem to do, not through argument, but through expression.

The poem has been slightly abridged in this selection.

## Explanations

**Stuttering**: repeated cry. **decoy**: bird (trained) to entice others.  
**Cairn**: a mound (or pyramid) of rough stones. **numb**: benumbed with cold. **pinions**: wings. **dazed**: dazzled. **wheel in**: turn back. **stubbles**: Stumps of grain left after harvest. **Abruzzi**: region of Italy on the Adriatic. (spilt grain is from the view-hungry quails gold wasted by the peasants.) **dark petals**: the quails are beautifully likened to dark petals languidly falling into the nets. **the subtle doom**: acute and ingenious ruin or death. **spores of pestilence**: germs of fatal disease. **"seeing that each of us, Lured by dim.....of time"**: the poet compares the fate of man with that of quails in that man is lured by dim hopes into death in this world which is revolving blindly only to be caught into the nets of time; Cf. Arnold in *Dover Beach*. **ephemerids**: insects or flowers lasting a day or two. **brittle**: fragile, apt to break.



PART X

THE POETRY OF THE MODERN  
CONSCIOUSNESS  
( CRITICISM )





## THE POETRY OF THE MODERN CONSCIOUSNESS.

The true poets today are engaged, among other ~~in~~<sup>in</sup> things which they differ, in the analysis of the universal human situation in terms of contemporary life. Their endeavours would appear to be complementary. Whatever labels are attached to some of them, they share in common the revolt against the standards of contemporary civilization. The revolt began as early as Matthew Arnold, Fitzgerald, James Thomson, and the Swinburne of *Poems and Ballads. First Series* and *ATALANTA*, taking what one might call a destructive and pessimistic form. In the Tennyson of *Locksley Hall* and *In Memoriam*, the Swinburne of *SONGS*, Walt Whitman, and Emerson it took an optimistic form. Side by side with this, one must consider the poetry of Hopkins who is on the trembling line between the old and the modern poetry. His simple poem in this selection throws back to Arnold's *Dover Beach* and contains the profoundest statement of the human condition in the twentieth Century.

To-day the different attitudes of the poets are different attempts to break beneath the surface of the enormously solidified appearance of the age to the instincts, traditions and fundamental nature of humanity beneath. Alternatively, there are attempts on the part of the modern poets to translate phenomena back into the terms of the soul of man. Whitman's *The Imprisoned Soul* and Emerson's *Brahma* would make it clearer than ever. This going back to the soul of man can best be likened to the method of psycho-analysts analysing a dream. So, in some of these nineteenth century poets as well in some of those of the twentieth century one cannot but see the rejection of the present, the clutching at a straw of reality. For instance, Mr. Eliot sees nothing but despair and death, and ends by reconciling himself to the Church. In Yeats's case it is what may be called aristocratic individualism. Arnold would seem to be driven, in the midst of apparent prosperity and optimism, to live on the greatness of the past and personal relationships salvaged from the achievements which look like disaster: "Ah love let us be true To one another:" Fitzgerald would appear to speak with the lips of Arnold:



"Ah Love ! Could you and I with HIM conspire  
To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,  
Would not we shatter it to bits--and then  
Re-mould it nearer to the Heart's Desire !"

*In his Spring and Fall: to a young child.* Hopkins' conclusion is :  
"It is the blight man was born for,  
It is Margaret you mourn for."

One can certainly compare it to Arnold's statement in his *Dover Beach* :

"And we are here as on a darkling plain  
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,  
Where ignorant armies clash by night."

Auden and C. Day Lewis do not appear to be horrified at the chaos of the world, that is, the chaos of *The Waste Land*. Nor do they contrast it with a prodigious tradition of the past. On the contrary, they accept it as the background of their lives, and allow its rubbish and its plants to sprout through their poetry. They seem to say "perhaps this is rubbish, perhaps this is not. Anyhow, let it grow into our lives, perhaps it will put forth the shoots of a new life ". But, Auden's poem in this selection is an excellent example to illustrate his revolt against the values of civilization. In *The Magnetic Mountain* C. Day Lewis looks forward to an optimistic orientation towards the future. All these poems, therefore, point to this modern consciousness. Each gives a magnificent amplification to the other.

Disregarding the chronological order of these poems it is well to begin with Fitzgerald's quatrains which startlingly outline the modern situation.

### **The Rubbairat of Omar Khayyam.**

Fitzgerald's *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* reflects doubts and unbelief which were never stilled in Victorian age. Perhaps it is not correct to take it for the translation of the spirit of the quatrains of Omar Khayyam. It should be related to the predicament which evoked Butler's *Analogy*, Arnold's *Dover Beach*, Swinburne's *Atalanta in Calydon*, James Thomson's *City of Dreadful Night*, Hopkins' *Spring and Fall: to a Young Child*.



In 1859, did not Darwin cast doubt as to whether life was ever created, destroying the old teleological proof of God which Paley taught? George Eliot's unbelief, the atheism of Charles Bradlaugh, the agnosticism of Huxley, Leslie Stephen, John Morley and W. K. Clifford were obvious incidents of the age. Did not Clough write of his loss of faith? Do not Arnold and Clough represent the typical Victorian mentality—that of the wistful unbeliever, unable to square his intellectual convictions with the traditional faith he has lost, whose loss he continually mourns?

Fitzgerald would seem to have lacked the courage to claim originality of his poem which had certainly the relevance of contemporary situation. Did he not delete from the original draft the following quatrain which is by no means less blasphemous than the outbursts of De Sade?

“Nay, but, for terror of his wrathful Face,  
I swear I will not call Injustice Grace;  
Not one Good Fellow of the Tavern but  
Would kick so poor a Coward from the place.”

Is not there the decantation of the same idea in James Thomson's *City of Dreadful Night* in which the “demonist” says:

“Who is most wretched in this dolorous place?  
I think myself; yet I would rather be  
My miserable self than He, than He  
Who formed such creatures to His own disgrace?  
The vilest thing must be less vile than Thou

Not for the temples to Thy Glory built  
Would I assume the ignominious guilt  
Of having made such men in such a world”.

Perhaps it is not fair to make a scapegoat of Omar Khayyam for the antitheism of Fitzgerald's poem. What appears antitheistic in Omar Khayyam of Persia is nothing but the mystic poet indulging in the explosions of familiarity with God whom he takes on the informal level of an intimate friend. As should be clear from the third quatrain in this selection, Fitzgerald is driven like Arnold



in *Dover Beach* to live on personal relationships salvaged from the chaos of the world: "Ah, love, let us be true to one another" because the world anythiug is but desirable.

However that may be, Fitzgerald's poem is not to be dismissed on the basis of its theme. There is nothing artistically lacking in a belief in unbelief. Implicit in Fitzgerald's quatrians, there is, certainly, predestination of man to destruction by some chance or—if theism is to be accepted—by some malicious power. It is the predicament in which man finds himself—a really bleak world-order. But this bleak-world order can be flawed through the beauty of art, as, for instance, in the tragedies of Sophocles and Shakespeare. So, in Fitzgerald's quatrains the presence of beneficent world-order is implied by the overmastering magic of poetry and formative excellence while the personal predicament is their theme.

### Explanations

**Wilderness** : desert, that is, this world which has ruthless disregard for the happiness of man. **Enow** : enough. **battered** : in ruins. **Caravanserai** : the world regarded as Eastern quadrangular inn with great inner court where caravans put up. **Night and Day** : Life and death. **Pomp** : Show, grandeur. **Conspire** : plot. **this sorry scheme of things** : the entire dispensation which leads to unhappiness. **remould** : frame it anew. **Nearer to the Heart's desire** : in accordance with our wishes. **the moving finger** : the finger of Fates. **piety** : the quality of being pious. **lure** : deceive, coax.

### III FROM LOOK, STRANGER

In this poem, which is third in his collection of poems entitled *Look Stranger*!, Auden analyses the universal situation in terms of contemporary values. Auden looks at life from the view-point of the modern who has no absolute scheme of values, having nothing but his own knowledge and emotion on which to build the foundations of his universe. Ronald Botteral expressed it so well in these verses:

"All sap has gone out of tradition  
 ... ..  
 ... .. we are dismembered,  
 Into a myraid broken shadows,  
 Each to himself reflected in a splinter of that glass  
 Which we once knew as cosmos."

Here is Yeats in his *Second Coming*:

"Turning and turning in the widening gyre  
 ... ..  
 The falcon cannot hear the falconer;  
 The best lack all conviction, while the worst  
 Are full of passionate intensity."

Mr. T. S. Eliot questions the standards of contemporary civilization in the same way. Apart from *The Waste Land*, one can illustrate it by referring to such a short poem as *A Cooking Egg*: In that poem, the poet at the age of thirty, and Pipit, his old nurse are sitting together in her little room. He remembers the days when he was a child in the same room; when he would buy penny oranges to eat with Pipit, and think of them as the world which was to be his oyster, and of the future life which he imagined would be like heaven. Where have all those visions gone? He deplares the disillusionment coming from the present world:

"But where is the penny world I bought  
 To eat with Pipit behind the screen?  
 ... ..

Where are the eagles and the triumphs?"

Similarly, in this poem, Auden says that "our" ancestors, who went out to hunt, held that "reason's gift" added to the lion's innate passion "for personal glory" would give it "the rightness of a god." But the poet looks at contemporary civilization and says



that love now is sublated to the terms of guilt so that "our hunting fathers" could not at all imagine—living as they were "in that fine tradition"—the "intricate ways" in which this reversal of values has taken place. In the circumstances, he contends the optimism of the "hunting fathers" and concludes that "reason's gift" or any physical change, like that of bone-tissues, would have worsened the lion in that it would have been the animal's ambition to "think no thought but ours,/ To hunger, work illegally, [and, what is really funny]/ And be anonymous." It is, indeed, a beautiful poem, with a closely-packed thought. It uses speech-rhythms closer to prose. Certainly, Elizabethan blank verse or any other old verse-form could not do justice to the tempo of life that this poem embodies. In point of style, Auden recalls Hopkins and Donne. Moreover, it is simple so that one can say that, pejoratively speaking, there is nothing, so far as the diction of the poem goes, "poetic."

### Explanations.

- the lack** : the imperfections. **quarry** : intended victim or prey.  
**dying glare** : Sharp look while dying. **raging** : lusting.  
 "the personal glory" which reason would add, personal glory would be equal to the liberal appetite and power, and finally, the rightness of a god. **Intricate** : complex.  
**ligaments** : short band of tissues which are flexible and fibrous, binding bones.  
**work illegally** : work unlawfully, to the detriment of the world.  
**anonymous** : not exposed for all these follies.

## THE MAGNETIC MOUNTAIN.

V. In **Magnetic Mountain**. Mr. C. Day Lewis looks forward to an optimistic orientation towards the future. The poet invokes his "Kestrel Joy, O hoverer in Wind!" He is searching "beyond the rail-roads of reason" for a "magnetic mountain—that is, truth. This is the first part of the poem. Proposing to follow his friends, Wystan (Auden) and Rex (Warner), along the political road to it, the poet surveys (in part two) ~~some~~ reactionary types: the clinging mother, the conventional school-master, the priest, the domestic man "heart-deep in earth". Part Three exposes more open enemies of progress, the flattering spell of love, press sensations and press education :

"Professor Jeans spills the beans

Dean Inge tells a thing

A man in a gown gives you the lowdown..."

Finally, in a series of lyrics, he praises a social effort governed by the twofold conception of man as soarer and earth-bound. The poet, however, seems to be concerned with ideals, not institutions. The lines included here form the first part of the poem. It is a statement of faith just as *Donne's Hymn to God the Father*. Clough's *Sav not the Struggle not Availeth*, or just as the poems mentioned in this section are statement of faith. But the *Magnetic Mountain* like the poems of Eliot and Auden contains not only different vocabulary but points to the different "feel" of poetry which is characteristic of the present. There is a story of a governess who asked her two girl-students what the shape of the earth was. Having been coached by a scientific elder brother, they replied. "It may be conveniently described as an oblate spheroid." The governess, piqued at this reply, retorted. "That may be so, and it may not be so, but it is certainly nicer for little girls to say that the earth is more or less the shape of an orange." Many in India feel that it is nicer when the poets use the dear familiar words and forms of tradition. Like Mr. Robert Graves many, people even in England feel the same way.





PART XI

ENGLISH POETRY OUTSIDE ENGLAND

(CRITICISM)



## BRAHMA

Brahma is the supreme God of Hindu mythology, and in the later patheistic systems, the Divine reality, of which the universe, entire matter and mind, is only a manifestation.— The impact of science, in the mid-Victorian era, on sensitive minds was by no means happy. Many writers lost the traditional faith and were in what Arnold called “the darkling plain”. Some blasphemed and, like the author of *The City of Dreadful Night*, completely lost their bearings. Others revolted only to recover faith in some kind of cosmic order. The theme of Emerson’s poem here points to the trend of the times, through rationalistic enlightenment and evolutionism, with a vestigial trimming of christianity, to pantheism.

Swinburne’s *Hertha* would seem to be a companion-piece to Emerson’s poem and was to England what Emerson’s *Brahma* was to America. Swinburne outgrew the revolt of *Poems and Ballads, First Series* and *ATLANTA* and comforted himself with the belief in the divinity of man. Many of the philosophical poems, such as the *Hymn to Man, Genesis. Hertha* and *Mater Triumphalis* in Swinburne’s *Songs before Sunrise*, reflect the poet’s belief in a cosmic order. In fact, Clifford elucidated his “Cosmic Emotion” by references to these poems of Swinburne. However that may be, it is rewarding to read Emerson’s *Brahma* in the understanding of Swinburne’s *Hertha*. Hertha is the old Teutonic earth goddess, the counterpart of Demeter. Many threads are thought are interwoven into it: the Scandinavian myth of the tree Yggdrasil whose blossoms are human lives, a few suggestions from Hindu pantheism of the *Mahabharata* (which Swinburne is said to have read under the auspices of Bendyshe), hints and suggestions from Blake, Whitman, and the writer of *Job*. Hertha represents three ideas: to the religious-minded, God; to the scientist, the evolving Life-Force; to the philosopher, the unknown reality, something like Emerson’s Oversoul, Brahma. Hertha is to be identified with the human spirit:

One birth of my bosom  
One beam of mine eye;  
One topmost blossom  
That scales the sky.



"Man, equal and one with me, man that is made of me, man that is I."

Here is the Oversoul addressing itself to an individual almost in the words of Hindu pantheism :

"But what thing dost thou now,  
Looking Godward, to cry  
'I am I, thou art thou  
I am low, thou art high ?'  
I am thou, whom thou seekest to find him :  
Find thou but thyself, thou art I."

It all throws back to what Hindus call "Tatwuum Asi".

Here is another stanza showing how Swinburne seems to have kept Emerson before him while writing *Hertha* :

"I the mark that is missed  
And I the arrows that miss,  
I the mouth that is kissed  
And the breath in the kiss,  
The search, and the sought and the seeker, the soul and  
the body that is."

The dreamer in Swinburne thought that he saw signs that the Kingdom of Man was at hand. A later generation sceptical of these views may smile at him. The eternal mystery which lurks beyond the advancing posts of knowledge should warn all men against dogmatism concerning the nature of cosmic order. The philosophic outlook of an Emerson, or the world-view of a Swinburne, cannot be proved uniquely valid any more than the abandoned *Weltanschauung* of a Milton. Poets who offer a synthesis of an untenable system of thought will, however, be read enthusiastically if that thought is woven into a memorable pattern. There is no denying that Emerson's triumph lies in having made—and all this just through expression—the belief in Oversoul a spiritual necessity. It is interesting to compare the last stanza of *Brahma* with the last but one stanza of Swinburne, quoted above.

### Explanations

See criticism on *Brahma*.

**Subtle** : mysterious. "They reckon ill who heave me out" : The people, who ignore me, miscalculate. **weak** : tame, submissive.

## THE SOUND OF THE SEA

In this sonnet, Longfellow beautifully compares, the "rushing of the sea-tides of the soul, the human aspirations to the first ripples of the flowing tide of the sea. These aspirations are, he says, foreshadowings of things beyond the human reason or control. This sonnet may be profitably compared with Emerson's *Brahma*. Both of these poems point to the divinity of man, which Swinburne sang of in his *Songs before Sunrise*. After the impact of the scientific discoveries of the mid-Victorian era, many people lost faith. However, they could not afford to do without it altogether. Comte's positivism came pat to the purposes of many writers who were spiritually starved. Unlike James Thomson, many traversed "the darkling plain", and many inclined towards pantheism. Longfellow's poem is better enjoyed if read in the light of this perspective. See, for further explanation, criticism on Emerson's *Brahma*.

**Explanations**

**the deep** : Sea. **Cataract** ; waterfall. **Steep** : Hill side. **Foreshadowing** : Prefiguring.

## THE IMPRISONED SOUL

Walt Whitman (1819—92) was born in Long Island, New York. He published his famous edition of *Leaves of Grass* in 1855. These twelve poems are calculated among, other things, to loosen the mind of still-to-be-born America from the fold of the superstitions, and the tenacious and stifling anti-democratic forces of Asiatic and European authorities. Whitman made himself a champion of intellectual independence in America. His poems, on moral, social, and, political questions were written in an unconventional form between rythmical verse and prose. They contain some beautiful lyrical passages and show a strong sense of the brotherhood of man. In his analysis of the universal situation of man he seems to have been optimistic. Some philosophical aspects of *Leaves of Grass* tally with those of Swinburne's *SONCS* and Emerson's *Brahma*.

In this selection, *The Imprisoned Soul* contains the profoundest statement of the human condition. Tho poet addresses himself to the Soul and wants to glide forth and to be wafted from the trammels of mortal flesh and the love of this world. The poem may be compared with Emerson's *Brahma* and Longfellow's sonnet, entitled, *The Sonnd of the Sea*. Having been convinced on the basis of science that Life is Death and "the rest is silence", the poet goes to the Soul, stressing the "inner" Spirit of man rather than the outer body. In the light of the perspective that time affords, the modern reader finds in this theme of the poem nothing but an amalgam representing the confused mental condition of the modern bourgeois intellect. From the viewpoint of Criticism, the main point is whether the poet has woven the ideas into a memorable pattern, and not the ideas in themselves. Behind all these philosophical ideas, there are, as Nietzsche so well put it, "Valuations, or to speak more plainly, physiological demands, for the maintenance of a definite mode of life"\*. Has poetry anything to do with these debates?

\**Beyond Good and Evil*, pp., 3—4.



## THE DANCING GIRL

Rabindranath Tagore was one of the well-known modern Indian poets who used the medium of English. He was famous for his ability to represent the sights, sounds, beliefs and customs of his own country. He showed an admirable skill in his choice of forms suitable to them. He used prose to express poetic ideas and thus reminds one of the most important issues that critics have to consider. This issue is, as Mr. Edmund Wilson put it in his *Triple Thinkers*, "Is verse a dying Technique?" Tagore invents a new form to express a new idea.

In this poem the phrases are poetic, though printed in prose. Rhyme has been ruled out. One feels that poetry can be enriched by this departure from the ordinary forms. The experiment is, indeed, interesting. Walt Whitman and a large number of present-day poets have made this kind of experiment. The poem, in this selection, is the most appropriate example here.

## Explanations

**scanned** : stared at. **lank shanks** : long legs. **mute** : silent. **rabble** : crowd. **majesty forlorn** : lost dignity. **mange** : a skin disease, which causes the hair to fall out. **yearning** : longing. **austerely** : gravely. **ascetic** : holy man. **rampart** : fortification. **smeared** : stained. **moistened** : made wet.



## IN THE BAZAARS OF HYDERABAD

All that one can say about this poem is that its descriptive form is very interesting. It has an unusual rhyme-scheme and creates before one's eyes the sights and sounds of an Indian Bazaar. It is an admirable example of the music which exists in mere words, the effect of the poem depending mainly upon words. Of course, something has to be said for the pictures it creates. But the words, such as 'Cithar, Sarangi, sandalwood, henna and spice' give it a special musical quality, especially for the Western reader.

**Explanations**

**Tunics** : perhaps shirts or short coats. **Vendors** : merchants or shopkeepers, sellers. **Pedlers** : hawkers, wandering merchants. **Scabbards** : the sheaths in which swords are kept. **Spells** : charms. **Aeons** : ages, centuries. **Tassels** : *Jhalar*. **Azure** : blue, **Chaplet** : garlands.

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